Disrupting the Maestro: Tuneful Youth Insights for Engaged Music Education

By

Verne Lorway

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies

in the Faculty of Education at the University of Prince Edward Island

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We accept this dissertation as conforming

to the required standards

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Abstract

This innovative dissertation research has been designed, implemented, and disseminated through this written thesis, public performances and a website (http://saswclub.wix.com/saswclub). The research was undertaken *with*, *for*, and *by* students in one secondary school in Atlantic Canada. The following research questions were addressed: (a) How do students articulate their perceptions and experiences of engagement in music-making, (b) How do these student perceptions and experiences figure into pedagogical practices for teaching music and further engaging in musicmaking and school, and (c) Are student ideas being heard? Why or why not? To answer these questions, 30 student participants collaborated with the researcher who is also a music teacher in situ. The research took place over 15 months through sustained and varied critical ethnographic methods. Interviews, documents, reflexive observations, music-making, and musical performances were collected and analyzed through a fugue-like process. From this process arose a Song Writer's Club within the school. Teacher and student participants collaborated in the duties of recording, production, musical instruction, accompaniment, and equipment management. Student participants wrote, performed, and recorded songs. They also spoke about their musicking experiences during two interviews. The ethnographic processes were shared with student participants via video, songs, journals, and images. Students provided important insights about teaching and learning music, and about developing engaged education more generally. They recommended a resolution of current gaps between formal and informal musicmaking and teaching. They also suggested a need to collaborate across diverse musical styles and to interrogate maestro-driven educational processes. The dissertation contributes to the field of Educational Studies by challenging adult-centred education through a new lens of disrupted maestro and by inviting authentic inclusion of youth in educational research and practice.

Preface

Disrupting the "maestro": Tuneful youth insights for engaged music education

This dissertation is an original intellectual product of the author, Verne Lorway. The fieldwork introduced in Chapters 1-4 and fully explicated in Chapters 5-8 was approved by the University of Prince Edward Island Research Ethics Board: Reference Number 60054966.

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Acknowledgements

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To Duane and crew at the Cape Breton Fudge Company in Sydney for hosting our many open mics and events. We enjoyed the lovely ambiance in your venue and the great snacks!

Dedication

To Mum, for pushing me to always think of others while being true to myself

Chapter 1: The Quest of the Maestro

This work first came into being when I challenged my assumptions about the practice of music education in various educational settings. Specifically, I noticed the ease, spontaneity, and enjoyment with which students engaged with music within their daily lives seemed to be out of sync with their experience in band and choir rehearsals. In trying to re-engage the students in music class, I suspected music teachers needed to foster an understanding for the nature of these youthful musical experiences. Ultimately, I began by changing something in my own approach to teaching and learning music. Over an eight-year period I worked with students to re-vision the school music program at Sydney Academy High School in Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. At one time, instrumental band reigned supreme in the school, whereas our program had grown to include vocal music and general music classes at all grade levels. Our re-visioning also included the construction of an audio recording studio in the classroom (Lorway, 2014). Within this space, the students were engaged in writing and recording songs in musical genres not often represented in school music programs. They performed these songs and other tunes in public performances. Thus, began our musical rebellion, and the launch of this dissertation work as another possible way forward.

This dissertation research was crafted to assist young people to enhance their musical and overall learning engagements by developing participatory processes for youth-attuned, musical performances and productions, and to provide a space in which students could speak about their music-making experiences in and outside of school. In addition, this research addressed the problems and promises of music education for enhancing student engagement and educational pedagogies. In this chapter, I describe how my role as the *maestro* of the school music ensemble became unsettled while working with the students in my music classes. This disruption was

necessary, given my desire to create a more engaging learning experience for the students through music-making. I situate the research questions within the literature on school engagement in order to trouble the perception of youth as being at-risk (Tilleczek, 2012). I then guide the reader into the process of how I reconstructed my role as the music teacher through my collaboration with thirty young people in the Sydney Academy Song Writer's Club (hereafter referred to as Song Writer's Club, or the Club). This rethinking of the role of the maestro is then extended into an examination of further, necessary disruptions in music and educational pedagogies and structures.

Disrupting the Maestro's Nobility

The curtain rises, and the maestro, stick in right hand, is poised to begin the piece. Looking out onto the faces of the students, with their instruments up to their mouths, the maestro lets the first measure of the music run through her mind in order to feel the tempo before beginning the piece. She gives the preparatory beat, and the students in the wind band take a deep breath. The first note played by the ensemble is dissonant and completely out of tune. The students do not seem to be following the music at all, and suddenly break into a rendition of "Taking Care of Business" by Bachman Turner Overdrive, at a completely different tempo. The maestro looks frantically out at the ensemble, waving her stick to a completely different rhythm and meter. The volume of the music climbs, and the maestro drops her stick, and runs off the stage, screaming. The students laugh, as does the audience.

What I have just described is a nightmare that I had hoped would never occur during my career as a secondary school teacher of instrumental and vocal music. I once felt as though I was the supreme maestro in control of the artistic direction of the ensemble. I enlarged the beat pattern to signal a crescendo in the music, or struck the ictus for the musicians to show marcato

in the score. I felt as though the ensemble clung to my every motion, mirrored my interpretation, expressed my ideas, and read my thoughts. Mine was a difficult but noble task: to authentically interpret the work of the composer and to train the ensemble to reflect this interpretation.

Over the course of my research I would be faced with this very nightmare via the words of a student participant:

> Effy:[1] We're in the margins. We are definitely in the margins. Us [*sic*] weird music folk are in the margins. The people that are being looked at are like, the jocks, and like the sports peoples. And they've always been the center of attention. But yes, they do great things. They're great at what they do, but they haven't heard from us yet.

These words shattered my image of the noble maestro as guardian of the sacred interpretation of the musical works of the composer, by asserting that there were other interpretations in the music class, which rivaled my own. I quickly understood that the young people in the ensemble were absent. I believed *their* interpretations of the music, *their* voices, *their* rich insights, feelings, ideas, and expressions were not present in the work as they needed to be. As the maestro, I worked hard to ensure they mastered my interpretations. Reflecting back on the words of Effy, I realize I had questions about the role of the maestro from the very beginning of my 20 year career directing wind ensembles and concert choirs. This dissertation addresses my questions directly:

1. How do students articulate their perceptions and experiences of engagement in music-making?

2. How do these student perceptions and experiences figure into pedagogical practices for teaching music and further engaging in music-making and school?

[1] Pseudonyms are used for all participants.

3. Are student ideas being heard? Why or why not? By whom? How could we better translate youthful insights to local and national audiences?

The method for this dissertation is a participatory, collaborative and youth-attuned critical process which helps to interrogate the maestro. The method is fully explicated in Chapter 2. Through a focused form of listening, the way is paved for a more engaged education for young people. The narrow interpretations of youth as being at-risk in school and society are unsettled in the project. This reveals, through music, the complex lives young people lead. The maestro abandons the podium to share power between student and teacher. The project engages and empowers young people and gives validity, in a tuneful manner, to the notion that art and music are not well heard as serious modes of disruption (Tilleczek & Kinlock, 2013).

For instance, I remember when I first started teaching music in secondary school, I was assigned a combination of wind band and general music classes. They accidentally placed a student from the general music program into an instrumental band class. I spoke with the student and told him I would arrange to have him removed from the band class and placed back into the general program, but he insisted he would like to stay in the band class and learn to read the music. I was somewhat hesitant given the fact that he was a guitar player in a sea of wind instruments and two percussionists. Nevertheless, I agreed to have him stay in the class. We worked at scales and technique, followed by two pieces of repertoire. We played the works as a full group, isolated sections by instrument, and recombined the constituent parts into a unified whole as is the standard practice.

Later that week, I gave the students a class period for individual work, and as an opportunity to practice either in sections, or in smaller, more informal learning groups. It was then that I discovered this student had learned all parts of the scores under study and could voice

them beautifully on his guitar. He had also improvised sections of the music, which made them come to life. As other students around him heard him interpret the music in this way, smiles broke out on their faces. All thoughts I had of suggesting that this student withdraw from this class disappeared. The interpretation of the music emerging from this student during his interactions with the other band students did not come from my waving of the baton. *The maestro had been interrupted*. This incident was one of many which caused me to rethink my teaching methodology. Through occurrences such as the one I introduced here, I was pointed down a path for music education (and education in general) that brought to life the works of critical pedagogues from across the decades, and upon whom I relied in this dissertation for scholarly guidance (Abrahams, 2005, 2010; Cook-Sather, 2002, 2006; Giroux, 1985, 1994; Smyth, 2006, 2007, 2011; Smyth, Angus, Down, & McInerney, 2008; Smyth & McInerney, 2013).

I realized why more students like this guitar player were not opting to study formal music programs in school: There was no place for them to express themselves freely in the large ensemble. Voices were lost and silenced. *They could not hear and see themselves in the music*. Paradoxically, it was my maestro self who heard what I suspected to be an oppression of young people through music education. I wondered if this silencing of young voices was similarly reflected in other school contexts. Could students hear and see themselves in school, in general?

Analyzing the Disruption

Reviewing the literature in school engagement reveals that many students are simply not seeing themselves in school (Smale & Gounko, 2012; Tilleczek 2008, 2012; Tilleczek et al., 2011; Willms & Friesen, 2012; Willms, Friesen, & Milton, 2009). The inability to hear and see themselves through their involvement in school has contributed to the disengagement of young

people from secondary school (Smyth & Hattam, 2001, 2002; Smyth & McInerney, 2012). Smale and Gounko (2012) conducted a qualitative study with 12 young people who had dropped out of high school and ended up incarcerated through the youth criminal justice system. Among their recommendations for practice included furthering involvement of young people in schools, especially for those who are experiencing struggles. In one study, Smyth and McInerney (2012) stated that students who have become disenfranchised from school feel like exiles. This disenfranchisement begins within a school environment that has silenced students and prevented them from speaking out. What they found was that these students had developed a critical analysis of the kinds of oppression they had experienced in school that had contributed to their feelings of disengagement and eventual decisions to leave school altogether. Smyth and McInerney (2013) have gone on to examine the ways in which students can speak back from these margins.

In *Critical Pedagogy for Social Justice*, Smyth (2011) attributed the *marketization* of schools as a major contributor to the pressures felt by students in school. School systems have adopted neo-liberal policies serving the interests of transnational corporations impacting classroom life, without input from the voices of students and teachers. Smyth asserted that teachers must become intellectuals to see outside the corporate measures of big business in order to release us from our subservience and dependence (p. 27). In turn, we can begin to collaborate with students to help them develop as activists who conceptualize school and daily life outside mainstream culture. In my capacity as a music teacher, I suspected that through a radical co-construction of musical ideas, the students can become much more critical of the corporate mentality in school and society. Giroux (1994) invoked a very similar idea when he advocated

the use of critical pedagogy by the teacher as a means of promoting student interrogation of mainstream, market, and corporate values in the classroom.

The pressures acting upon young people in contemporary schools, brought about by the market model of education, can be interpreted as *ruling relations* (Smith, 1987, 2002, 2006a, 2006b). From the standpoint of a music educator, I understand these to be musical ruling relations. As a concrete example, the self-esteem of young people is deeply affected by the sounds and images portrayed in the music industry as indicated by the research (Aubrey, 2006; Aubrey & Frisby, 2011; Greeson & Williams, 1987). Aubrey and Frisby (2011) found that young people are sexually objectified through music videos. In particular, they found females to be more highly objectified than males in that, "the use of sexual objectification of female artists' own bodies might convey the message that for women, a primary way they can succeed in the music industry is to sexually objectify themselves" (p. 26). As a music teacher, I became aware of the pressures, or musical ruling relations, acting upon the young people with whom I work, both female and male, emanating from the music industry. If I were to assist them to see outside this model of music and resist it, I had to constantly rethink my role as the authoritative maestro. My goal was for them to develop their own musical ideas, and the maestro was an obstruction in this process.

Another barrier to youthful school engagement has been the problematic discourses of youth that label individual students as *at-risk* (Tilleczek, 2012, 2014). According to Tilleczek (2012) this interpretation in school and society of youth has contributed to their further disenfranchisement from school. Tilleczek (2012) states, "Risk, however, is better understood along a continuum and 'in-risk' better depicts a situational rather than individual process as recommended by the phrase 'students in at-risk situations'" (p. 259). Due to the vast array of

factors contributing to student acts of disengaging from school, simply labeling them as individually at-risk has taken away from the particular, unique contributions all young people can make to school and society.

Therefore, as the students entered the class of this maestro, I understood that I needed to change something in my practice to assist them in engaging in music-making. Tilleczek (2011) has developed a "complex cultural nesting framework" (p. 4) in which she weaves together insights from sociology, anthropology, youth studies, and human development. In her trajectory, Tilleczek suggests fundamental social process of young lives is expressed as "being (biography), becoming (time), and belonging (society)" (p. 10). This framework assists us in working with youth in such a way as to enhance their unique talents and contributions in various educational contexts and to provide a way to critically read and interrogate the social places, structures, and power relations in which they dwell.

Dunleavy and Milton (2009) proposed a way of thinking about the engagement of young people in public schools in Canada which relied on three components: (a) social, (b) academic, and (c) intellectual engagement. In their report, Dunleavy and Milton described the social engagement of students as their "participation in the 'life' of the school," their academic engagement as their "participation in the requirements of success in school" (p. 7), and their intellectual engagement as a "serious emotional and cognitive investment in learning" (p. 13). My dissertation research sought to develop a clearer understanding of how these three areas of engagement might be connected through an investigation of musical, voiced, social identity-processes arising from these young people during their music-making processes. I also expanded the definition and enhanced it as will be seen in Chapters 5 and 7. In Chapter 5, the students made note of how appreciating the different musical styles of their peers through music-making

caused them to think about their own music in new ways. This dissertation helps fill a gap in the current knowledge of youthful, voiced research on engagement in public school arts programs, by directly and artfully involving a diverse group of young people in the data collection, analysis, and dissemination process. I bring into focus for the reader their many expressions of engagement through hearing and seeing the performed data on the website by way of recorded songs, videos of live performances, and images, produced by the students in collaboration with the teacher.

In this dissertation, I place this set of processes into conversation with the collaborative model of student *relational power* developed by Smyth (2006). Students and educators adhering to this model establish power by "building trust within and across a range of groups in schools in ways that enable the development and pursuit of a common vision about how schooling can work for all, including those most marginalized and excluded" (p. 3). Smyth asserted that in order for such trust to build, school systems need to understand and welcome students in the classroom, instead of constructing an institutional identity for them. Consequently, learning must be co-created between teacher and student (p. 7). This research has been informed by the work of both Tilleczek (2011, 2014) and Smyth (2006). As the data will sing and demonstrate, these tuneful, youthful agents are powerful as they share with us particular aspects of their lives and identities through the art of music-making.

Reinventing the Maestro

Each day I thought about the ways in which students collaborated among themselves and with the teacher to develop their unique musical talents. I reflected on the sounds of the innovative songs students wrote on their own, and about how to best bring their musical lives into the center of the classroom. What were their musical ideas? What more did I need to know

as a music educator to assist with their musical engagements during the dissertation research? In addition to student directions, many scholars and critical pedagogues informed this interrogation of the maestro and music education.

For instance, Dewey (1938) in *Experience and Education* critiqued the progressive school system of the 1930s in the U.S., and distinguished it from the traditional school. In particular, Dewey focused upon understanding what makes sound educational experiences as the key to developing good practices. The problem he identified was that the progressive schools in the last century had abandoned all ideas from the traditional schools in favor of those that embraced notions of freedom of expression and unguided learning of children and young people. However this is problematic, according to Dewey as the past is part of the present. To reject those traditional schools would also be to reject those ideas needed to educate young people. One such idea was the need for authority in schooling. Dewey argued, "when external authority is rejected, it does not follow that all authority should be rejected, but rather that there is need to search for a more effective sources of authority" (p. 21). It would also foreclose the opportunity to learn from those ideas that did not work well.

Dewey (1938) asserted that education was a social activity, and that the teacher had to move from a "boss" or "dictator" to a "leader of group activities" (p. 59). I thought of the words of Dewey and whether or not the maestro could be a leader of group activities. What might this mean? Generating interest in the topic at hand? Ensuring students had what they needed to investigate ideas, and creating the right social environment for such learning to occur? Dewey clearly stated that one of the primary responsibilities of educators was to "recognize in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth" (p. 40). I believed my new non-maestro self could assist students to have such growth experiences in

school. I also thought about the model of teacher as intellectual and collaborator as expressed by Smyth (2011). So, I began to think of the role of the educator as less that of a maestro, and more that of an intellectual collaborator and leader of sorts. Such a leader could assist students to see and hear outside the narrow, corporate interpretations of self and other reflected in commercial models of music and school in general. Such a facilitator could help provide the opportunities or educative experiences needed for young people to hear and see themselves in school and to therefore guide pedagogical practices and structures.

The dissertation research also called upon Fabian's (1990) work, in that I collaborated with the students to investigate the idea of youth-attuned musical engagement in school and society. Johannes Fabian is an anthropologist who was working with a popular theater group in Shaba Zaire, which was working through its own process of identity and self-determination after French colonial rule. When invited over to the house of a group of three professionals from Zaire, Fabian offered the honor of consuming chicken gizzards. He asked if they would like to share the chicken gizzards with him. They refused, insisting "'Le pouvoir se mange entire.' Power is eaten whole" (Fabian, 1990, p. 23). Understanding that power to these Zairian people was deeply connected to eating practices, the story unfolded as Fabian tried to root out the meaning of this ancient proverb. Each person he asked had a different interpretation and meaning. Others had little knowledge of its origin. As a result, Fabian facilitated a staged interpretation of the phrase by a local popular theater group.

Fabian (1990) believed the meaning of this proverb had to be generated by the people themselves, and could be accomplished through theatrical performance. For Fabian, its deeper significance did not need to originate from the colonial powers above. The actors constructed its meaning through their own performance processes. Similarly, the students engaged in the

dissertation research were actors in a staged exploration of music education. How should music education be in schools? What was missing from music education? What was it really all about? How could we make it more relevant to the lives of students?

This dissertation is, in some ways, a radical endeavor to assist students to interpret the meaning of music education rather than have this meaning imposed upon them from above. If for example, they were pressured by the stereotypes within the commercial, market model of music in school and society as the research indicated (Aubrey, 2006; Aubrey & Frisby, 2011; Greeson & Williams, 1987), then we needed to develop some tools to hear and see outside these stereotypes. As such, the students with my collaboration would generate a much more complex notion of their musical selves. Fabian, of course, was using theater as the main vehicle through which this meaning would be generated whereas I thought about how we might act out and sound out new interpretations of music education.

The theory of aesthetics by Dewey (1934) in *Art as Experience* was useful in this regard. Dewey made the distinction between art as a refined product as opposed to art as part of our ordinary experiences. Dewey attributed this bifurcation to the rise of nationalism and imperialism in world cultures. Elevating art to represent the greatness of a nation had a political agenda, which removed the art as an object from the experience out of which the artists had created these works. In order for us to remove this separation, Dewey believed we needed to return to an understanding of how art emerges as a part of the experiences of human lives. He used the experience of the Athenian citizens who built the Parthenon to illustrate his point:

> And if one is to go beyond personal enjoyment into the formation of a theory about that large republic of art of which the building is one member, one has to be willing at some point in his reflections to turn from it to the bustling, arguing, acutely sensitive Athenian

citizens, with civic sense identified with a civic religion, of whose experience the temple was an expressions, and who built it not as a work of art but as a civic commemoration (pp. 2-3).

Dewey (1934) believed we needed to return to the experience of the aesthetic *in the raw* (p. 3) in order to understand the refined products. One of my students named Margaret worked hard in the music room to find the melody and supporting harmony to a song she was writing. As I listened to Margaret's song (see Figure 1), I thought of the many songs students wrote based in their own lived experiences. These poems represented aesthetic experiences in the raw. Students asked me from one year to the next how they could take their initial poems, and turn them into songs in order to present to their peers and family members, and so on. As a non-maestro I developed the piano accompaniment with the student in a way that maintained the character of her song as she conveyed to me. Within this more refined form, she was able to share this song and communicate its meaning in public performances, as well as through audio recording processes.

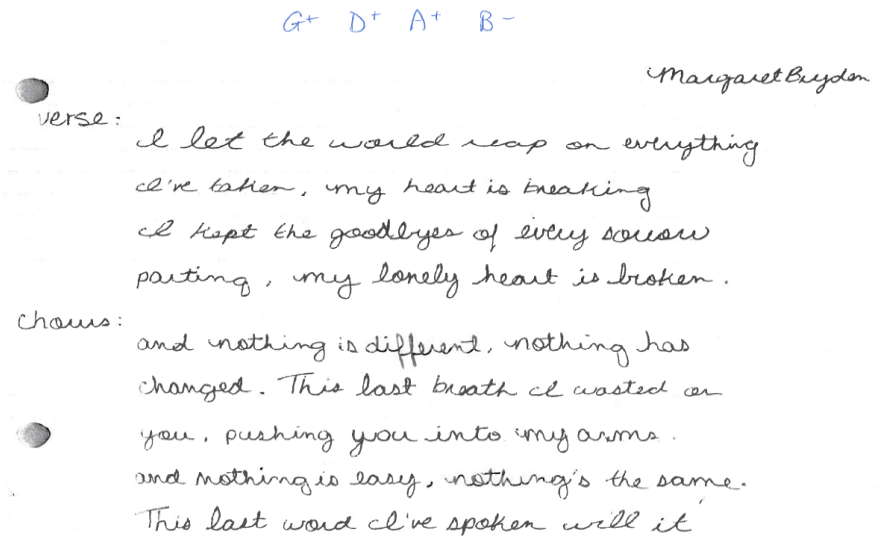

Figure 1. Margaret's Song is a poem written by a student with chordal accompaniment marked on top by me. The student sounded out the melody with her voice as I worked with her to find chords on the piano to match her melody.

Dewey (1934) made a pragmatic argument in favor of authentic, art-making experiences originating from the lives of people. I reflected on the words of one of the dissertation research participants, Gandhi, who stated, "But we need to maybe find a way so that people could put more of themselves in their work." These words resonate in powerful ways. The young Gandhi has echoed the very essence of Dewey's trajectory of aesthetics, and I believe this was the key to the engagement of young people in their learning in the music classroom, as well as in school overall. As an intellectual, collaborator, and leader, this maestro gradually laid aside her baton to work very differently, so these young people would see and hear themselves in the music and in school in general.

Summary: Creating a Stir

Many scholarly and youthful voices have now disturbed and disrupted the maestro. I have become increasingly interested in hearing what the students have to say about their experiences of engagement in and disengagement from school music through collaborating with them in the formation of the Sydney Academy Song Writer's Club. I have been mindful of how their music-making is an integral part of their identity processes and development as agents in school and society. Such development needed structural support in the school system through developing relational practices, which would assist us in navigating the school terrain, and the pressures it entailed.

In June of 2014, a year since the first phase of critical ethnographic field work for this dissertation, I was informed by a guidance counselor that a number of grade nine students from the region were planning to attend the school the following year so that they could take part in the Song Writer's Club program. Parents of students in the school, and in other schools commented on the program, asked questions about it, and tried to figure out how their daughters

and/or sons could become part of it. I spoke to my school principal and the consultant for fine arts for the school board, and it was agreed that my work in the Club would count towards my contact time in the school schedule, thus relieving me of some extra duties. I was in disbelief about this turn of events. What began as a simple club, arising from a dissertation project to bring together students from diverse musical backgrounds to share songs, performances, and record together, had become a program in the eyes of the students, their parents, the school administration, and the school board. It remains to be seen what is gained and lost as this develops in the future.

Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation describe in detail how the research unfolded. These chapters guide the reader through the process of garnering research ethics, recruiting students, research design, participatory ethnographic methodologies, research methods, and modes of data analysis. Chapter 3 also begins to present findings that arose when invoking these participatory methodologies and methods. Included in these chapters is a detailed description of the website that was developed by the student participants over the course of the 15 months that this research took place. The website is crucial as data and performance since it holds both the visual photographic images and the musical performances that were created during this dissertation project. One particular video of note describes the student-produced school rock show as part of their participation in the Song Writer's Club. All songs in the background were written and recorded by the students, with some help and support from myself as expressed by one of the participants in the video. A full explication of the website will be given in Chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 4 follows with an important contextual description of the socio-economic landscape of the community in which the dissertation research took place. Chapters 5 through 7 describe, in the voices of the students, the further nature of musical and school engagements.

One main influence on their musical engagement was the development of *reverberant spaces* "*with*, *for*, and *by* young people," (Tilleczek, 2011, p. 133). The development of these spaces is explained in Chapter 6. In the final chapter, I impart the wisdom of the students as it was shared in the course of this research. The student participants made important suggestions and recommendations to educators in describing how transformative listening and artful co-construction of teaching and learning can bring about greater engagement of young people in school and society. Chapter 8 also addresses the implications of this dissertation research for future education and scholarship in educational studies. It ends with future directions for the Song Writer's Club as determined by the students, and with ways to implement the ideas of the students into practice, as informed by the research.

Chapter 2: Youthful "Musicking": Emergent Methods and Methodologies

In this chapter, I describe the diverse methods and methodological theories that informed this dissertation project, and thus the emergence of the Sydney Academy Song Writer's Club. These theories and modes of inquiry were drawn upon authentically as I investigated ways to fully engage students in reading, writing, performing, and recording music. Their voices were indispensable to the research. Christopher Small (1998) developed a philosophy of music-making which he calls *musicking*. In this model of music-making, the focus is upon the relationships that develop among musicians as participants in particular genres of music. Small believed that these relationships could be redefined to include a wider variety of participants: "Who we are is how we relate, and the relationships articulated by a musical performance are not so much those that actually exist as they are the relationships that those taking part desire to exist" (p. 134). The students and I devised reflexive, critical, performative approaches embedded in our music-making processes which emerged in social contexts. These approaches assisted us in answering the following three research questions:

1. How do students articulate their perceptions and experiences of engagement in music-making?

2. How do these student perceptions and experiences figure into pedagogical practices for teaching music and further engaging in music-making and school?

3. Are student ideas being heard? Why or why not?

Methods and Analysis

To best answer the research questions, I collaborated with 30 students for 15 months (September 2012 through November 2013) to gather data of their music-making processes in the after-school Song Writer's Club held at Sydney Academy, which I established for this purpose.

As the students progressed through their music-making processes, we gathered this data in the form of audio tracks, audiovisual texts, still photos, song lyrics, chord charts, interviews, and field notes. This data was collected in action in the context of the musical performance/ production processes of these young people (see Figure 2).

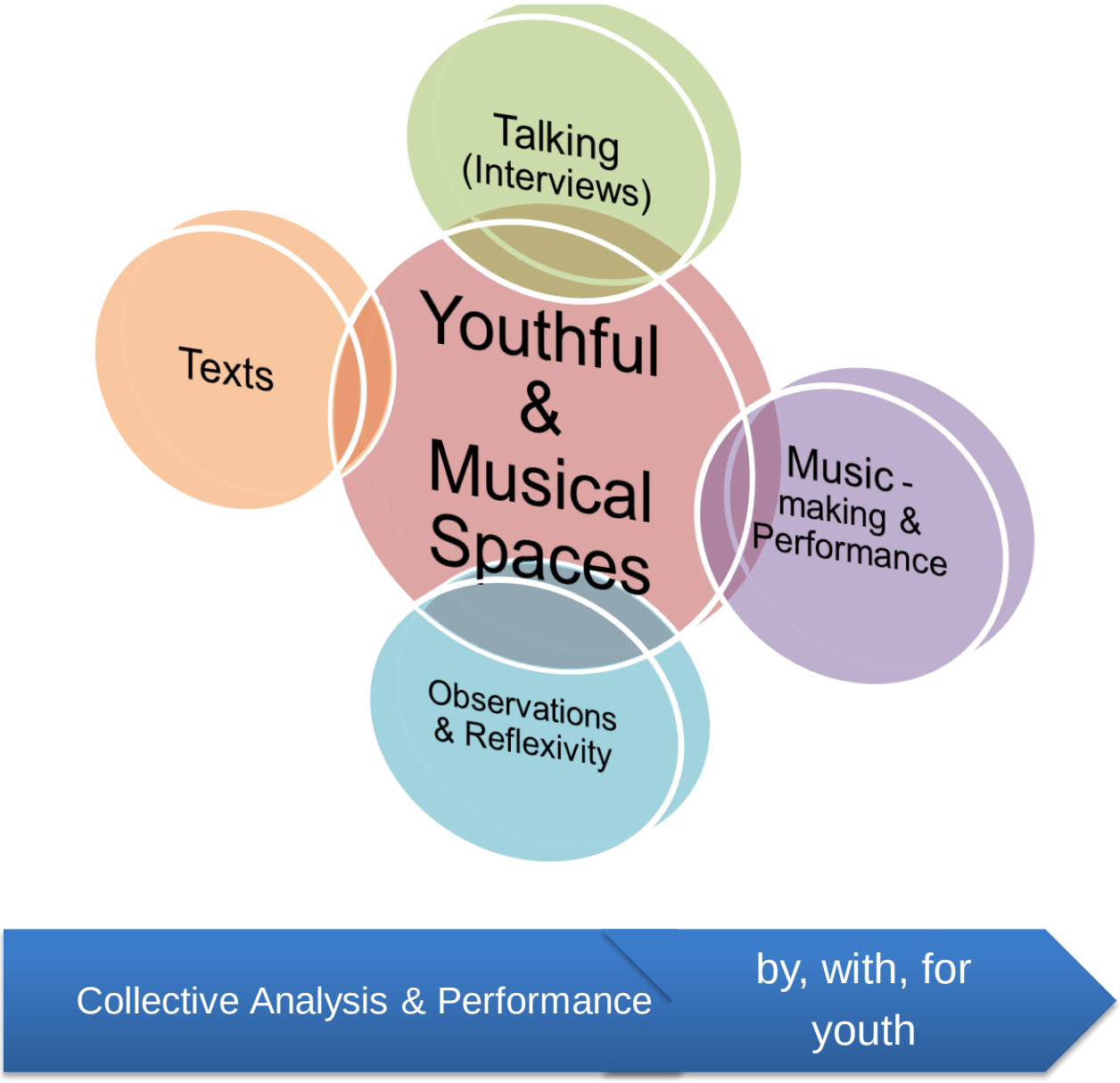

Figure 2. Diagram indicating the methods of data collection and analyses. These methods emerged from those spaces where youthful music-making occurred during the study. Analyses of musical performance processes was done collectively by, with, and for youth.

The audio and video data was retrieved by the students and, with my assistance, transformed into videos and recorded tracks which were placed on a website designed by the students. The recorded audio tracks had been archived in a SoundCloud (a web-based platform for musicians to upload and share their audio recordings) account for the Club. The Club website was posted on the school and school board websites for the 2012-2014 school years. It is important for the reader to visit the Club website (http://saswclub.wix.com/saswclub) and SoundCloud (https://soundcloud.com/sa-songwriters-club) to see and hear the work of the students by way of audio recordings; produced and live videos of public performances, or gigs;interview excerpts, artist descriptions, and images. All procedures and methods are detailed below.

Dialogue and Interviews

The students naturally formed informal learning groups in the Club. These groups were conducive to my conversing with the students. Our conversations in the Club space were formalized in two sit-down, open-ended interviews at the half-way point and end point of the 10 month period of data collection. These interviews or conversations allowed the students to engage in a highly descriptive, critical analysis of those institutions within school and society which played a role in both their engagements in, and disengagements from school in their own voices. I worked with the students to develop open-ended, conversational styles of dialoguing, which could shift with the direction of the conversation. Fontana & Frey (2005) preferred the term interaction to interview, and iterated that "Interviews are not neutral tools of data gathering but rather active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually based results" (p. 698). The students were aware that my position, especially as a teacher in the school, was to help improve the music-making practices and collaborate with them to enhance

their musical engagements in the school and greater community. My position was certainly not neutral as we worked to develop more youth attuned practices in the Club. The interviews provided us with an opportunity to continue our collaborative musicking processes in a dialogic manner, and the students were able to express their opinions of the whole process in a critical fashion.

Dance, Gutiérrez, and Hermes (2010) found that improvised conversations with individuals in diverse communities enabled the researcher to understand the phenomenon being spoken about from the point of view of the correspondents themselves. Similarly, Mason (2002) and Douglas (1985) described interviewing as a creative process which responded to situational dynamics and was therefore capable of leading to more in-depth accounts of moments and events of great significance to the interviewees. The interviews were conducted in the music room during my off periods, because the students were already accustomed to spending their free time there jamming, recording, and working on their music. Often, they would ask my opinion of something they were working on, and would converse more informally with me, and one another, about their music-making. It was only natural that the interviews would take place in this very same setting. The atmosphere in the music room leant itself well to the interviews between me and the students, as these interviews were both creative and improvised. I had a bank of questions to which I referred, but in the end, these questions merely served as a guide to open up the conversation to issues which really mattered to the students regarding music education and education in general.

Creative, improvised interviews in the music room helped develop what Dance et al. (2010) termed *cultural intuition* (p. 331) in a reciprocal fashion between the students and me. Many of the students participated in diverse genres and sub-genres of music with which I was

not immediately familiar. Similarly, there were musical forms in which I participated that were unfamiliar to many of the students. We needed to work together to form a dialogic bridge of understanding in order to develop the Club (Dance et al., 2010). Improvised speaking developed cultural intuition to bring about such a dialogic bridge, in the sense that "At times, this bridge allows not only for us to cross over to the other side but for the other side to cross over to us" (Dance et al., 2010, p. 330). Gutiérrez (Dance et al., 2010) illustrated how having a firm grasp of the significance of "la familia" (p. 341) in the Latina culture, assisted with her understanding of how to speak to and advise her students. Interviews were often conducted in less formal settings which gave the correspondents a feeling of home. Developing trust between interviewer and the correspondents resulted in authentic, reciprocal, and decolonizing dialogue. In the Song Writer's Club, this kind of dialogic bridge became an indispensible method of collecting interview data in a study aimed to support, but not pathologize, the diverse members of the community in which the research was conducted (p. 328).

I thought through how the students and I could devise our own interviewing methods suitable to the eclectic nature of our musicians, and I called upon my earliest memories of dialogue with family and friends in the Caribbean. As a small child trying to go to sleep at night in my Auntie Mavis' house in the sweltering heat in Kingston, St. Vincent, what stands out vividly in my memory was the sound of many voices talking. But not talking in a random fashion, although it may have seemed that way to someone on the outside. This was organized dialogue in a spirited fashion. One night, a neighbor brought over an enormous basket of pigeon peas. Auntie Mavis, Mum, Dad, another family member or two, and the neighbor sat around the basket to shell the pigeon peas together. While doing so, they dialogued about many things, mainly about local politics and their opinions of the work of the Prime Minister. At times the

discussion became heated with difference of opinions, beliefs, and perspectives. There was much laughter, and the occasional pause while one of the more soft-spoken members of the group offered their opinion on a matter.

I remember falling asleep to the sound of this dialogue. Although the conversations seemed to go around in circles, each time they returned to their point of origin, another insight emerged from the interaction. Another layer of insight brought forward another idea which always seemed to take place in an atmosphere of an awareness of everyone in the room. Whenever I participated in these discussions, I had the sense that everyone in the room was fully engaged in the conversation. Their circular way of speaking, which expanded at each turn, covered a lot of territory. This way of conversing runs deep in my person, and I believe that it originates from my Caribbean culture. During the second semester of the study, when I monitored a student discussion concerning "White Girl Behind the Guitar" [WGBG] (see Chapter 6 for further discussion), we naturally formed a circle, and began to share opinions on the subject. From that time forward, the group members called upon this method of dialogue whenever they felt it necessary to discuss a matter with the whole group.

Through musical performance, these young people brought the subjective meaning of events and occurrences in their lives into the study. The co-construction of musical knowledge in the Club, which took place between the students and me, often involved their dialoguing with me. Other times, interactions took the form of direct unstructured group discussions amongst themselves, in brainstorming sessions early in the recording process, or more structured group discussions when the recorded track was near completion. The interviews themselves were also a type of performance. They occurred as embedded processes in youthful recording, jamming, song writing, and musical performance.

As I stated earlier, I did begin with a set of five questions to which I referred during the interview. However, these questions were only a guide. They were meant to assist with the structuring of a more open-ended conversation between the students and me (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Lofland & Lofland, 1995). In order to convey these conversations, stories, and dialogues to the reader in the authentic manner in which they took place, I returned to the interpretive work of Fabian (1990) who described the concept of creating transcriptions and translations into English using verbal gestures. He stated, "in varying degrees—less so in discussion, more so in performance—the exchanges, which the following texts document, also include what one might call verbal gestures. For instance, the participants exchange formulae of greeting, exclamations, sounds marking assent, surprise, and questioning" (p. 98). From these students came a diversity of ways of speaking (Gardner, 2010). In these findings, I tried to stay true to these young people by depicting their many ways of speaking, as well as their many ways of music-making, by reproducing them verbatim.

The decision to include verbatim transcripts means that the reader will notice the occasional misspelled and/or mispronounced word, colloquialisms, and oddly-structured sentences. So as not to disrupt the flow of the conversation, I (Miss L) would oftentimes emulate slight grammatical errors and colloquialisms. This was in an effort to not make the students conscious of their ways of speaking, and to encourage them to share their thoughts with me. Initially, the notion of transcribing these conversations verbatim, and in the local vernacular, was garnered from reading work by Willis (1977). In *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*, Willis retold his conversations with "the lads" (p. 3) in their own vernacular. I am strongly convinced that the stories told by the students in the Song Writer's Club, are extremely authentic and full of meaning. When I began to interview the students, I

paid attention not only to what they were saying, but how they were saying it. Wanting to remain true to their words, I tried as closely as possible to transcribe the interview texts in ways that would maintain the character of the students themselves.

Texts

Of central importance to any ethnography is the role of text in the interpretation of events, the lives of people, and the meaning of their actions (Smith, 1987, 2002, 2006a, 2006b). Dorothy Smith (2006b) clarified text in institutional ethnography as the "means through which social action is mediated, organized and coordinated. Textual forms are crucial to how ruling relations come to be organized" (p. 38). In this research, the texts took the form of digital data such as the videos, recorded tracks, and photo images. The students themselves gathered these texts. They shot the videos, took the photographs, and wrote/recorded the songs in studio. At times, they recorded parts of the songs in their home studios, and collaborated with students also participating in the research project in the school studio. There, they would have added tracks, made changes, added effects, re-mixed, mixed-down to MP3, and burned onto CD. As I stated earlier, I opened a SoundCloud account to place their songs in one central location. The songs on the SoundCloud were later placed onto a website designed by the students which also contained videos they produced, live videos of their musical performances, images they captured in the Club, and excerpts from some of the interviews between the students and me.

The texts themselves represented moments of engaged learning, and the many musical expressions coming from the lived experiences of the young people in this community. It was through understanding the complexity of their different lives that I believed we would be able to understand how to approach the teaching of and learning with and from young people. I believe that it has always been so, but now an understanding of these lives, through an analysis of their

texts, has changed venues. Digital means created a whole new world within which educators and adults working with young people must become familiar.

None of these texts were fixed, empirical evidence of a rational phenomenon under study (Fabian, 1990). Fabian spoke boldly against this use of textual data such as pre-written scripts in favor of interpretive performances because, "It would be arbitrary to isolate one event from the process to which it belongs and to declare the filmed performance the definitive play. For that reason alone a definitive text cannot be exhibited" (p. 91). Fabian was speaking within the context of popular theater in Zaire. However, I believed his principle of the interpretation of textual data by the performers in a particular cultural context applied to this research. The students were given the space and opportunity to interpret music education and education in general through musical performance. Their musical performances revealed their particular beliefs and ideas surrounding music and musical performance, and education. The songs, lyrics, and modes of musical performance of these students provided us (the audience) with a window of insight into youth culture.

It was originally intended that both the students and I would capture conversations and significant moments in field notes. However, the students seemed more concerned with the "doing" of the music and the whole musical performance process. Consequently, as the Club activities unfolded, I recorded the progress in field notes. These field notes were rough scaffolds of stories, interactions, and events. They were often point-form notes with arrows and other markings that enabled me to re-construct the story later when writing the dissertation. These field notes included my immediate impressions and reactions to events and incidents (see Figure 3). Each time something occurred of importance to the students, we discussed it at the time, and then again in their interviews. As the story was told and re-told, the events became clearer, and

the insights gathered were more useful to the Club and its members. I noticed as the year progressed that the students became more open to accepting the musicking practices of others, and came to the realization that producing music in the youth world could take many forms.

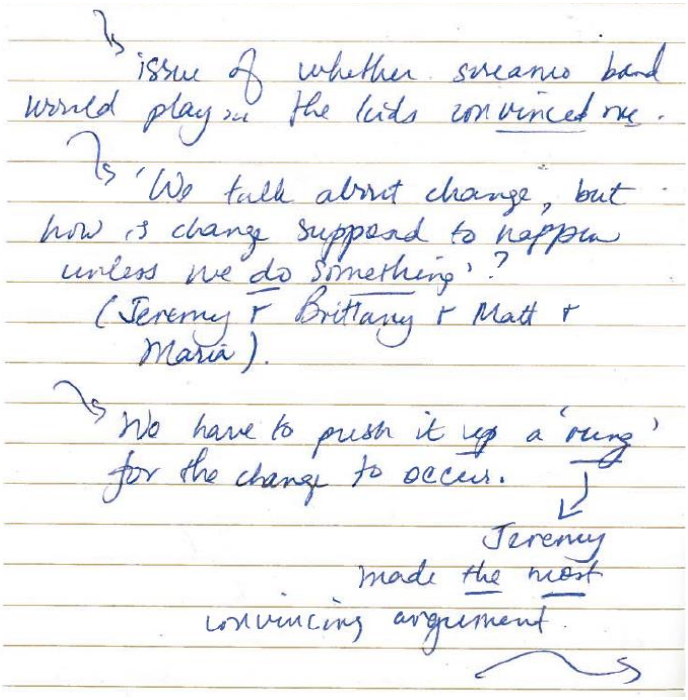

Figure 3. Copy of an entry from my field notes. Contains a series of events mapped out by me, which happened during the period of data. Later reconstructed into a story in the dissertation.

In keeping with the conventions of field notes in social science research, Fontana and Frey (2005) outlined four main points: "(a) take notes regularly and promptly, (b) write down everything no matter how unimportant it might seem at the time, (c) try to be as inconspicuous as possible in note-taking, and (d) analyze notes frequently" (p. 708). I carried a small notepad with me at all times to record observations, conversations, and events during the day in a chronological fashion. During the period of my dissertation research, these field notes became invaluable to my working with the students to maintain continuity in the Club by reflecting back on what was working, what needed changing, and how to go about such change.

Research Ethics and Student Recruitment

The research project was approved by the University of Prince Edward Island Research Ethics Board (UPEI REB), and the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board. I completed my Tri-Council policy certification, an online course required by the university for all researchers undertaking research projects involving human subjects, on August 12, 2011 (see Appendix A). The course was designed to familiarize the researcher with procedures and concerns of an ethical nature which must be adhered to when involving human participants in social science research. Early in the fall of 2012, student participants from grades ten through twelve from Sydney Academy were recruited (see Appendices B and C). No one was turned away from the Club. A meeting was held for these students and their parents and/or guardians early in September 2012 at which time the dissertation research was explained to them (see Appendix D). After hearing the explanation, asking questions, and conversing with me, 31 students and their parents/guardians signed consent forms to participate in the dissertation research project (see Appendices E & F). One student refrained from participating in the project following the information session. He chose not to attend any meetings, participate in performances, recordings, or interviews. When I asked him why he chose not to participate he told me he had developed other interests in school and therefore "did not have the time." Parental consent was obtained from parents of students under eighteen, as well as the assent of students themselves. The interview questions were given to the students and their parents/guardians at that time (see Appendix G). An explanation of the equipment the studentswould learn to use to collect the data was also given to parents/guardians at this time, as well as the plan for a follow up, debriefing meeting at the end of the year.

Twenty-five of the 30 students participated in two interviews with me. They were held mid-way through the data collection period (January, 2013), and at the end of the data collection period (June, 2013). Students also interviewed one another twice during those two periods. For this dissertation I present only the interviews the students had with me. I could not use all interview data in the dissertation due to the large amount of data generated by this project. Therefore, the interviews between the students will be used for further analysis and dissemination at a later date. I kept a journal of meaningful dialogues, interactions, and events that took place in the Song Writer's Club. As the project unfolded, I worked with the students to analyze the data on an ongoing basis. My journal assisted me to relate this analysis to the reader in a textual form.

The 2009 UPEI REB *Policy and Procedures* (http://files.upei.ca/research/research_ethics-board_policy_and_procedures.pdf) for conducting research with human participants described the translation of principles outlined by the Canadian *Tri-council Policy Statement: Ethical conduct for research involving humans* [TCPS 2] (Canadian Institutes of Health Research [CIHR], Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada [NSERC], & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [SSHRC], 2014). The policy demands, "that research involving humans meets high scientific and ethical standards that respect and protect the participants" (p. 7) in adherence to three core principles: (a) Respect for persons, (b) Concern for welfare, and (c) Justice (p. 8).

The first of the core principles is mainly concerned with those conditions and factors that "may diminish a person's ability to exercise their autonomy" (CIHR et al., p. 9, 2014). As per the guidelines, "Autonomy includes the ability to deliberate about a decision and to act based on that deliberation" (CIHR et al., p.9). The TCPS 2 was concerned with issues diminishing

autonomy, which include "inadequate information or understanding for deliberation, or a lack of freedom to act due to controlling influences or coercion," and in the latter case "fear of alienating those in positions of authority" (p. 9) may have produced a constraint upon the freedom of an individual. The authoritarian aspect of my role as teacher-facilitator needed to be balanced by a process of continuous input from students into the research design and implementation without fear of repercussions. As such, my main teaching methodology was grounded in an engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994, p.15). For 28 of the 30 students who had already taken classes from me, my approach was already understood as one of direct involvement/engagement of the young people in the teaching and learning processes (Dunleavy & Cooke, 2012). The Song Writer's Club itself was opened up as a space of collaborative learning the first day.

Balancing my role as teacher-researcher was the greatest ethical challenge for me. The study aimed to develop musical, youth-attuned practices (Tilleczek, 2011, 2014) through collaborative processes between teacher and student (Smyth, 2011; Smyth et al., 2008). Yet the perceived threat of harm due to power imbalances such as coercion still existed, particularly for the 28 young people being assessed by me. They may have feared repercussions for not participating in the study by way of the lowering of their grades, or status in the class, program, and school. This potential coercion was something I thought through and tried to address in my practice. It was made clear to students and their parents/guardians at the initial information meeting, that there was no expectation from them to participate in the project in order to keep their status in the school music program. They were free to withdraw from participation at any point in time without any consequences to themselves or their grades. They could pick and choose what they would like to do. Some chose to be interviewed the first time around; others, the second time, and still others, both times. Students participated in performances as they

wished, and recorded at times they felt they were ready. The atmosphere of the Song Writer's Club was open, caring, and safe as expressed by the students to me in their interviews. Small clashes which arose—such as bands breaking up, or disagreements about song selections for performances—were dealt with in an open, honest, manner, and students expressed that they had experienced a great deal of growth and change during the year.

There was concern on my part about whether or not the involvement of the parents in the dissertation research would negatively affect the autonomy of the students. The research ethics for the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board were clear: Parents had to sign letters of informed consent for students under the age of nineteen. In terms of the UPEI REB, informed consent was not a one-time event, but process of continuous feedback between the researcher, the students, and their parents. This became more apparent for me as a teacher working with students within a school system and being accountable to parents on daily basis. They were given updates on the Club activities on a regular basis, were present at the performances, and hosted many jam sessions according to the students. The effect of parental involvement in the dissertation research as relates to student participation in the research goes outside the scope of this study, but certainly warrants further study in the future.

In the second core principle, "Concern for Welfare," there had to be considerations for groups possibly affected by the research. The TCPS 2 (CIHR et al., 2014) acknowledged the possible benefits to groups of "knowledge gained by the research" (p. 10), as well as possible damage. The policy stated, "they may also suffer from stigmatization, discrimination or damage to reputation" (p. 10). All names were changed in the interview transcripts to guard their anonymity. These students chose their own pseudonyms. Students and their parents had the potential risks involved in the research explained to them at an early meeting in September as per

UPEI REB guidelines. They were told that the names of the students would be changed to guard their anonymity (see Appendices D, E, and F).

The students wanted to be seen and heard in musical performance. Therefore, the performed part of the study which can be found on the website did not aim to guard the anonymity of the students. It granted the wish of the students, which was to give visual illustrations of what it is like as a young person to be truly into the music. The images, audio tracks, and videos represent those moments in which the students were actively involved in creating musical performances as self-expression.

The issue of anonymity in the interviews was different from the audiovisual aspect of the study. The students wanted to be free to "vent" (as they said), or express their feelings and ideas about music and music education in their interviews. We were somewhat trapped in a conundrum of the students wanting to be seen and heard in the research versus their wishes to be anonymous under a pseudonym during their interviews, as per research ethics guidelines. Therefore, I needed to arrive at a happy medium. Their wishes to be seen and heard in their musical performances are depicted in the photos, songs, and videos they have produced. However, their interviews are treated as confidential in the written dissertation as per their wishes and research ethics protocols. Therefore, the images and video data are not directly connected with their interviews. As many of the students revealed similar ideas about school engagement through music-making, it only stands to reason that their verbal descriptions of these engagements might be depicted in photos and videos by any of the students at various points in the process.

According to TCPS 2 guidelines, these groups had to be engaged in the research design process to "help clarify the potential impact of the research and indicate where any negative

impact or welfare can [*sic*] be minimized" (CIHR et al., 2014, p. 10). It was advantageous that I had already formed trusting relations with members of the students and the school community over the past 11 years as a music teacher. However, as issues of a more personal nature to the students came to light during the performance/production process, they may have needed to talk to trusted individuals. On staff at Sydney Academy were two individuals who acted as support people when needed. The Mi'kmaq counselor who was a qualified classroom teacher and social worker offered to assist us with any needed dialoging and counseling of students. Miss "Q" (pseudonym) was a true supporter of the research from start to finish. Her expertise and abilities with the students as someone on the outside of the music class helped maintain a focus on the well being of the students. Another individual who became a supporter of our group was the school police liaison officer. Having worked for more than 20 years with youth in the Indigenous Black community, and the school itself for more than five years, Constable "M" (pseudonym) was at hand to help with issues arising with the well being of the students, and to offer any assistance to these young people and myself that was needed.

Both core principles dealt in some way with potential power relations/imbalances between the researchers and participants, and therefore demanded transparency throughout the research process to prevent the subjugation of any and all persons involved in the research process. Power imbalances could not simply be dealt with, for example, by having all participants plus parents and guardians of under-eighteen year old student-participants sign a consent form. Nor did it suffice to assure team members and participants that they could withdraw at any point in time in the study. Informed consent was an ongoing process ofcommunication and feedback between the young people and myself in the study as we interchanged roles as researchers, teachers, and learners in collaborative settings. To avert

further subjugation of these young people, they were involved in decision-making at every step in the process of data collection, analysis, and translation.

The research design methodology itself used an approach that placed the students in the heart of the research process "*with* and *for* and *by* young people" (Tilleczek, 2011). The collaboration between the young people and I helped "maintain free, informed and ongoing consent throughout the research process and lead [*sic*] to sharing the benefits of the research" (CIHR et al., 2014, p. 11). The students decided how best to present the data at the end of the study to translate the knowledge gained to the school and greater community. Although this may have seemed to privilege insider knowledge (Barone, 2009), every effort was made to promote dialogue between the team and the school/greater community in an ethical, honest fashion. At the same time, students were encouraged to remain open to feedback from their peers and trusted members of the school and greater community.

Student interpretations of the research appear in audiovisual format on the Club website. The students used their own technological devices at will, and submitted audiovisual specimens in this way. At times, recording was collaborative between studios in the homes of students and the school studio. Students were invited to submit their work from early on in the semester, at the initial meeting with parents and guardians, knowing they could change their minds and withdraw their tracks, images, and videos at any time during and/or after the research period. Analysis of the data was an ongoing process and involved all members of the Song Writer's Club and me.

Meet the Participating Young Artists

Brittany: My name is Brittany. I am involved in Song Writers Club to escape from everyday life through writing lyrics. I write pagan folk art, and I base the

lyrics of my songs on everything from nature to dark and gory. My first original consists of a young girl who is lost inside her own mind, where she creates a world where she is loved. Even though that is *not* the case, and she is not loved by this individual, the fantasy is better than the reality.

Eoin: My name is Eoin. Being a technician for the SA Song Writers is interesting to say the least. Alongside recording, managing technical equipment and spending many hours a week in the music room, I experience the eclectic personalities of the SA Song Writers. The experience is both entertaining and educational. Myself, I've been working hands on with much of the equipment we use in the music room since the age of three. I hope to go on with a career in the cinematic industry; so working with the Song Writers is definitely advancing my experience.

Violet: Hey there, I'm Violet. I've been writing songs since I was 10, my first one being a Christmas song called "Merry Christmas to You." Even though I've never liked, nor stuck, with that song, writing songs became a sudden interest, thus marking the beginning of my music career. I've been in school band since the age of 10 as well. Percussion was my main instrument. However, I have since learned more; guitar, piano, drums, and I also sing. My most recent song "If I Could" is performed by the band I'm in called Yelling in the Color Yellow. I joined the SASW Club hoping to learn more techniques from fellow artists, and meet new people and their ways of writing. It's a great experience, and I'm glad to be a part of it!

The Ocelots: We're a band currently of an undefined genre from Cape Breton Island. Our influences are from a very large spectrum. Some examples are: Paramore, Ely Leaf, The Story So Far, The Wonder Years, Mother Mother, Say Anything, A Day to Remember, NOFX, Senses Fail, and Blink-182. The songs we write come from our everyday experiences, and describe the things we deal with.

The students above illustrate the musical experiences and engagements of the 30 young people in the Song Writer's Club. Due to the diversity of social groups within the public school in which the project took place, I wanted to avoid overly predictable descriptions of the experience of engagement of students in music-making coming from fixed *knowledge claims* (Haraway, 1991, p. 187) in music education. I chose to focus instead on the nature of their highly individualized musical experiences in order to find themes and commonalities. I gained a rich understanding of youthful musical experiences in and outside school, by hearing a wide range of perspectives of music-making from these young people.

I used a purposive, maximum variation sample frame to select youth from across this wide range of backgrounds (Patton, 1990; Tilleczek, 2008, 2012). I hoped students would apply to join the Club from across a wide range of ages, cultural backgrounds, socio-economic backgrounds, academic achievement, and engagements in formal and informal musical processes. I hoped to achieve gender balance in the Club. At the same time, I experienced tension between my role as the maestro of the school concert band and choir and researcher. In a public school setting, I could not restrict entry to the Club to a particular sample of students from certain cultural backgrounds, genders, socio-economic status, and so on. Any student was permitted to apply to the Song Writer's Club.

There were 14 young women, and 16 young men between the ages of 14 to 18, from grades 10 to 12. These young people came from varied musical backgrounds. They had undertaken a mixture of formal and informal musical and technical training inside and outside school. Musical experiences they brought with them into the Club included school instrumental and vocal ensembles, private guitar lessons, self-taught technology and technical expertise, vocal lessons, other instrumental lessons, general music programs, or very little exposure to music-making in any of the above categories. Nine of the students were participants in the school choral program; four in the band program; four in the general music program; four in general music and choir; one in choir, general, and IB (International Baccalaureate) music; four in IB and general music; one in band, IB, and general music; and two who were not enrolled in music classes and who had never participated in formal school ensembles.

Resonant Themes: Voice and Identity

The student and extant scholarship expressed two initial themes that impact student engagement in music-making. Student voice and social identity processes were explored by the students and me. They were further contextualized through ideas drawn from music education theories, and investigated by the students through their direct involvement in music-making. Voiced research and social identity are explored below to expose the tensions and appropriateness for this dissertation research.

Voice

Voiced research with children and young people indicates that they are experts in their own worlds and have a valuable contribution to make as researchers in education (Burke, 2007; Chin, 2007; Thomson & Gunter, 2007). I understood from conversing with students over the years that they had developed music-making processes of their own both in and outside school.

As both the researcher and music teacher, I asked myself how to tap into their vast reservoir of music-making processes in order to gain a clearer insight into their learning. I believed the students themselves needed to have a strong voice in the research, teaching, and learning processes to accomplish such a feat.

In examining student-centered research paradigms, I found that they hold possibilities for a clearer understanding of musical experience. For example, during their research project with children and young people, Thomson & Gunter (2007) described student participation in school research projects as based upon a *standpoint methodology* through which "students' experiences can be the basis for bringing important everyday realities of student life in schools to the attention of staff" (p. 339). Their research, conducted within a larger movement in the United Kingdom, employed students as researchers (SAR). SAR was "a move to involve school students in school improvement, predominantly but not exclusively, through consultations about program development, school self-evaluation and conversations about learning and teaching" (p. 328). In the Kingswood project, a team of student researchers were invited to respond to a series of photographs in order to capture their views on how teachers addressed bullying incidents in the school, "Student-researchers not only articulated what they knew through the development of particular experience-based research, but had to explain and defend their knowledge claims with powerful adults" (p. 339).

Similarly, visual methodologies were used in a study by Burke (2007) to elicit descriptions from children about their world of play, given the fact that "children are well able to research and reflect on their own lives and the spaces they inhabit" (p. 32). In this study, an emancipatory methodology based upon Freirian critical pedagogy was called upon to attempt to release students from their role as "schoolchildren" and to act "as younger and smaller members

of the community" (p. 27). In the end, the children revealed deep insights into their world of play. Both studies indicate the tremendous possibilities for children and young people to take a lead in research processes that illuminate to adults issues of concern they face on a daily basis, therefore giving rise to reflection and change. Empowering children and young people as researchers in the dissertation research was a crucial step in understanding how better to address processes and practices in music education and education in general.

However, despite its strong points, the model of voiced research which engages student researchers has also been found to be problematic. As the research indicated, simply bringing the knowledge of children and young people into the conversation within the larger public realm is insufficient to change the power structures that continue the oppression of children in educational settings (Arnot & Reay, 2007; Bragg, 2007; Fielding, 2007). Bragg (2007) stated that SAR has the potential to continue the "managerial rhetoric" (p. 348) which had created the very oppressions under scrutiny, "Student voice is not unmediated, but guided, facilitated and supervised through specific techniques that delimit what can be said, and how speakers conceive of themselves—techniques for shaping subjectivities" (p. 349). Similarly, Fielding (2007) believed that "'Voice' has too much about it that smacks of singularity, or presumed homogeneity, of deferential dependence on the unpredictable dispensations of those who deftly tune the acoustics of the school to the frequencies of a benign status quo" (p. 306). In these critiques lies the potential for the continuation of the exploitation of children and young people through voiced approaches to schooling.

In making change in educational settings which could lead to the elimination of the oppression of children and young people, there was a greater question about how this research effort "positively unsettles the interpersonal, political and professional architecture of the school"

(Fielding, 2007, p. 302). The reality of working within a public school setting hardly allowed for such activity to occur. Arnot & Reay (2007) speak of the inability of "democratically inspired pedagogies" (p. 323) to challenge and change classification structures in the school system. Despite attempts to give everyone a voice within the democratic models of pedagogy, the same students of more privileged backgrounds continued to be validated while shutting out other voices from the dialogue. Through my research, I became mindful of the need to change something in my own approach to teaching and learning to prevent these possible injustices from occurring both in my teaching and in my dissertation research.

More recently, there was a movement away from voice to direct involvement in research with young people (Dunleavy & Cooke, 2012). The result of many years of conducting research in public schools had raised questions from young people about the research itself. "They want to know what it's for, to see the results, and to know what impact it might have" (Dunleavy & Cooke, 2012, para. 4). Arnot & Reay (2007) examined the tensions between different voices and found that "there are tense and often contradictory interactions between social voices and pedagogic voices, between dominant and dominated voice, and between voice and what Bernstein called *sub-voices* and *yet to be voiced*" (p. 318). Arnot & Reay believed that examining these tensions underscored the potential power for change in student voiced research. As a music teacher I was aware of how students had experienced a lack of voice in their learning as members of the school band and choir in particular. Through their direct involvement in the research, it was my belief that some of those voices missing in music education would resonate in the findings. When the listener hears the music these young people have created, performed, and produced, powerful messages are communicated about their young lives. It was our hope that by hearing these musical performances, adults in charge would closely examine and possibly

change music education practices and processes. Such critical reflection (Freire, 1990) would mark an important step in the move from adult-centered to youth-attuned approaches.

Identity

The notion of inserting those missing voices from music education into pedagogy fit well with the identity work young people do as part of their growth and development. Erickson (1968) demonstrated that adolescence was a time for young people to use their imaginations to explore their sense of self independently from those identities often ascribed to them by adults. These identities were in a constant state of change and transformation. The fluidity of the identity of young people is clearly reflected in their work in the music class (Green, 2005; O'Toole, 2005). O'Toole (2005) asserted "all identities are unstable because they are always in process and music is one of the sites of identity that is engaged in the process of identification" (p. 300). In diverse classrooms, students define themselves musically in unique ways through exploring their identities and the identities of others in ways that defy "biological explanations and other quantifiable 'truths'" (p. 300). The students and I observed a transformation of preferences of their musical genres during the research process. Participating in a multi-genre club such as the Song Writer's Club had assisted the group to develop an openness and appreciation for diverse musical genres, which they verbalized in their interviews (see Chapter 5).

I was interested in hearing and seeing the identity processes through music-making by young people that had informed music education (DeNora, 2000; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Saunders, 2010). DeNora (2000) asserted that music provides a means whereby individuals can articulate their identities. In a similar manner, Hargreaves and Marshall (2003) outlined the ways in which students take up identities through music by identifying themselves "in relation to the social and cultural roles existing within music," or looking at "the ways in which music may

form a part of other aspects of the individual's self-image, such as those relating to gender, age, national identity, disability and identity" (p. 264). The students identified themselves as members of various bands, as solo artists, technicians, musicians of various musical genres, as sessional musicians, and so on in a manner which was both fluid and constantly emergent. The students often describe their musical identifications in phrases such as "I'm a trumpet player," "I'm a rocker," or "I'm a roadie." Through jamming, recording, and sharing songs, these young people did this musical identity work continuously in and outside school (Saunders, 2010).

I was also interested in seeing how these young people engaged in music-making to define themselves at those intersection points of race, nationality, gender, class, and sexuality. I was particularly interested in examining ways they unsettled, disrupted, and/or reified stereotypes of young people, of people of color, or of marginalized young people (Alim, 2011; Perullo, 2005). Perullo (2005) recounted the story of how young people in Tanzania in the 1990s used Hip Hop music to overturn negative stereotypes of young Hip Hop artists as "Hooligans" or "Wahuni" (p. 76). On the other hand, Alim (2011) described how young people reify existing hegemonic discourses through Hip Hop literacy practices. Alim made the point that these practices could help us engage in conversations with young people about dominance and oppression they experience within society. A Celtic death metal band stimulated such conversations in this dissertation research during their audition for the school rock show described in Chapter 5. Their performance of a death metal, anti-bullying song problematized the stereotypes of musicians of that genre and furthered conversations about the tensions and complexities of adult perceptions towards various youthful music-making practices.

In the research, identity combines individual, personal identity with group or social identity (Castagna & Dei, 2000; Côté, 2006; Rummens, 2001). More specifically, "to acquire an

identity, one must be perceived to be identical to or identify with, someone else and, at the same time, exhibit some uniqueness" (Castagna & Dei, 2000, p. 28). Rummens (2001) asserted that in order to understand identity process formation in young people, one needs to understand the political nature of identity formation. The difference in individual identities of young people from their social identities within school contexts, for instance, was an indication of societal tensions and power dynamics acting upon young people in school and society (p. 17). Talking with my music students over the years caused me to reflect upon how their identity formation processes are shaped by such power dynamics within the "institutional sway" (Bruner, 1996, p.14) of secondary school settings. As a music teacher I have had many conversations with students about how strongly they feel that they do not fit within the stereotypes perpetuated by schools. It is my understanding that these young people are working to get past these stereotypes to develop their own sense of self and identity.

During the dissertation research, I encouraged the students to both be true to themselves, and to understand the landscape of the school in which they were making music. I emphasized with the students that, through dialogue, as invoked by Freire (1974), with adults and other students, they could do the kind of musical identity work that would be reflected in their musical performances. I hoped their music-making would help instill confidence in them to initiate and participate in dialogues in the school and larger community, resulting in a better engagement in their learning and school life. In Chapter 4, I discuss the historical and current context of the community in which the school is embedded in order to provide the reader an understanding of the socio-economic background of a community in the heart of a recession. This allows for a better-contextualized interpretation of the youthful performances and musical resistance to social injustice.

The remainder of this chapter details how I theorized the design of the study as informed by a set of youth-attuned critical, performative, dialogic, and reflexive approaches and methodological processes. The reader will come to understand how the students collaborated with me to shape the actual research approaches and processes.

Research Design and Methodology

The research methodology was critical ethnographic and thus qualitative. The goal was to understand the music-making experiences of young people in their own voices. "Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). The students in the Song Writer's Club and I employed four main methodological traditions and theoretical practices to analyze the data: referential reflexivity; critical, institutional ethnography; critical pedagogy; and performance ethnography. Each is reviewed, analyzed, and explained in turn, leading to a summary of the ways in which we integrated and worked across these methodological traditions in this project to arrive at a unique process of inquiry for the study of a youth-attuned music education.

Who is the Maestro?: Researcher Reflexivity

One of the main lenses through which I engage in the dissertation research is a reflexive lens based my own experiences of difference. Defined by James (2000), *difference* can be understood as "relational, fluid, multiple and contextual, and therefore must be thought of in complex ways" (p. 21). The complex and difficult experiences I had growing up as a multi-ethnic female in Eastern Canada had positioned me to develop pedagogical approaches which opened up the Song Writer's Club as a space that welcomed multiple perspectives in music

education and education in general. The vignettes of this dissertation, which appear in Lucida Handwriting font, form an added layer of reflexivity that aim to invite the reader into my experience of difference as a source of analysis and understanding of the youth culture of Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia (Ellis, 1991; Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). These experiences assisted me to work with the students to challenge my understanding of music-making experiences derived from my eurocentric classical training and work towards a more complex understanding of their diverse musical expressions in the Club. Such complex understandings often meant critiquing and deconstructing commonly held assumptions about acceptable music education processes and practices, as well as those in which the students were engaged in their everyday lives. I have written and inserted the following short narrative to reflect my unique identity and style at the intersections of race, ethnicity, social class and place. It is followed by analysis that invites the reader to reflect on the standpoint and positioning of the maestro.

I can still remember vividly, arriving at the airport in Port of Spain early July, 1984. The first thing that struck me was the heat…the sweltering heat, or so it seemed to me and my two brothers coming from Nova Scotia, Canada. However, a huge smile appeared on Mum's face. While we whined and complained about the heat, Mum repeatedly said, "Oh, isn't this lovely!"

The second thing I remember is seeing a short, little East Indian-looking man at the gate, waving to us. "Uncle Rupert," my mother calls out. Uncle Rupert was our great uncle and brother of Mum's mother. Mum's mother was from India. Her parents had come to the islands a generation before, but few people seem to know the family history, aside from one Auntie who is very closed mouthed about

it all. Apparently, my great grandmother was a Brahmin who married a Sikh. North and South India combined as one. Although my grandmother was betrothed to another Brahmin, she rejected this arrangement to marry another Western classical violinist like herself. An Indian woman met and married a man outside her caste, who was one-half Scottish, and one-half African (possibly Islamic) and Spanish. With my father being of mainly Dutch-Scottish descent (although it is guessed there was a family member of Mi'kmaq descent), the marriage of my own parents continued the tradition of eclectic mixes, and each member of my family looks different from the others. I remember being called "the multinationals" at different points in time as I was growing up.

My great grandfather was a schoolmaster. Mum and her brother and sisters visited every Sunday while I was growing up and had to do algebra and recite poetry in the afternoon. Although Mum was in a private "British" school, my great grandfather felt he needed to make certain they were all receiving a "proper" education. Afterwards, they would have a large meal together. The servants in the house took their meals in a separate room. Mum used to take her plate and eat with the servant children. Her relatives would become angry with her for doing this, but apparently they were unable to stop her…

After arriving at the airport and greeting Uncle Rupert, we were driven right away to visit relatives and friends of the family in his enormous Mercedes Benz. I remember feeling as though I was still on the plane. I could not hear a thing! Uncle Rupert took us to the home of his son Rudy, as well as those of several aunties, uncles, and cousins whom I had never met before. In each home, we were

offered food and wine. The stories poured out from each relative about different members of the family. Who looked like whom, who was where and what each person was engaged in doing. Having the fairest skin in the family (aside from my father who was finishing up business at home before joining us two weeks later), there was almost always a point in which the discussion became a quest to ascertain whom I most closely resembled. I was told the shape of my face was exactly like my grandmother, Dorothy. I had the "short genes" of Mum's Indian grandfather and Dad's mother in Canada, as well as the genes for green eyes from Mum's Scottish grandmother on her father's side. Yet, although I knew I was somehow different, I never felt excluded from the family. I felt different, but never strange.

The stories, laughter, food, and wine seemed to go on forever. We talked for so long, we almost missed our connection to Kingstown, St. Vincent that day. Uncle Rupert bought us the largest hamburgers I have ever seen and insisted we stay in the airport to eat them with him before leaving. Lucky for us, the airport was small enough that we managed to make the plane. I believe we were last to step on the tiny propeller plane for a very turbulent thirty minutes to St. Vincent.

I will never forget the sound and sight that day of us driving through Port of Spain with Uncle Rupert in that vast Mercedes Benz. Uncle Rupert is a prominent lawyer in Port of Spain. "You can't beat the British system of education," he said with a mild English accent. "You just can't beat the British system." Suffice it to say my background has been steeped in colonial, imperialist values and beliefs on both sides of the family. But the two interpretations of our

colonial roots were very different from one another. What seemed to prevail in both views was a trust in the system, and belief in the compassion for the "powers at be." These provided me with the reassurance that following the rules of the "system" would help me succeed.

I glided through the school system relatively unharmed, although each of my brothers and sister has their own stories to tell in this regard. I remember the tales early on of parent teacher meetings at which time my mother often had to clarify to the teachers why they needed to change their approaches and ways of doing things as informed by her observations of us at home. As she was a registered nurse at the time with a strong background in psychology, she knew what we needed to grow in a healthy fashion in the school environment! Yet, I cannot help but wonder, although Mum might have delivered her words with power, persuasion, and compassion, whether or not the teachers listened attentively and tried to follow her words because my father, the attorney, sat quietly beside her. The bumps and bruises we experienced at school as related to our difference were opposed directly by Mum, and supported by Dad.

The radical support of and appreciation of difference I grew up with has formed the foundation of my trajectory of how music can be experienced: As a rich, diverse sound experience. When I was trained as a conductor of wind and choral ensembles, I managed somehow to preserve my pride in this difference. I entered my first job having questions about the ways in which music could be taught, learned, and ultimately, sound as voiced by young and old musicians alike.

Having grown up with regular contact through travel and visits with both sides of my family, our family was almost sub-cultural. There was almost no one in the region to which I could relate in terms of personal culture. I have often felt as though I have been in exile, no matter where I am living. I believe this liminal state has affected how I approach teaching and learning in general, and music in particular. It can always be more diverse. There is always another layer of meaning. Through the interpretations of the musicians, something new can always be revealed. I believe musicians create the meaning of the music ourselves. It does not come from above, from some external ubiquitous voice that is disconnected from our lives.

Perhaps Uncle Rupert was right in his own way that "the British system of education" cannot be beaten. Maybe what he meant was that its cultural ideas lend themselves well to multiple interpretations in multiple settings. As an analogy, depending on which artist is at the easel at the time, I believe we can interpret the works of composers and artists in many ways. And this might lead us toward creating new musical knowledge; a people's musical knowledge.

At the heart of this doctoral research is a reflection on the complexities surrounding the development of my voice and identity as a multi-ethnic child and young person growing up in Sydney, Nova Scotia and attending Sydney Academy High School. This realization has helped me understand the complexities of any narrative as the defining one—race, class, gender, and age are all moving, and require interpretation and reflection as they are worked out in life. My mother had come to Canada from the Caribbean as an international nursing student in the 1960s. My father was raised in Cape Breton. His family origins could be traced back to the United

Empire Loyalists who arrived in the early 1800s from the New England states. Growing up, my brothers, sister, and I were fortunate to be active agents with a strong voice in the community through arts activities, sports, and the church. Yet I never experienced a deep feeling of acceptance in the community. There was always something different about us. I watched many times as my older brother was made fun of at school for his dark skin. Other kids often asked why I was so fair skinned. In junior high school, I remember being called my first racial names: "zebra" and "nigger lips." Although I was not as dark skinned as my brothers, I experienced complexities with my own identity processes: "Growing up, I never saw myself as Black or White" (Taylor, 2000, p. 61).

I often closed myself off from the local culture and developed a kinship with my relatives and friends from the Caribbean. While on summer holidays, I listened to the stories of my Caribbean elders, danced in the street for "Carnival '84" in Kingstown, St. Vincent, and accompanied Auntie Mavis to the early morning market. I have always felt close to my Caribbean family. When I was in grade twelve, my parents divorced. Consequently, the family vacations "down south" ended. I felt slightly disconnected from my southern heritage. This gave me the opportunity to experience aspects of my northern heritage for the very first time. As a young adult, I took advantage of the opportunities to participate in ceilidhs in Cape Breton, square dances, and kitchen parties. This was not my only experience with local culture. I familiarized myself with the work of local artists and professionals in the industry. I learned that the music culture of Cape Breton was not one-dimensional. There were many musical cultures on the island, especially in the realm of indie, pop, rock, country, jazz, metal, punk, and so on. Getting to know these genres of music on the island served me well while doing my dissertation research with high school students whom I found to be connected to these musics. Within my

inner torrent of conflicting worldviews, music has provided me with a sense of home and belonging. I suspected these young people were experiencing similar kinds of feelings while trying to find their place in the world.

Finding my voice and sense of self in Cape Breton, and abroad, has been fraught with experiences of my feeling inside and outside the community. And still I wondered as a multi-ethnic female growing up in a small, east coast Canadian city, what life would have been like had I not had creative outlets such as music, dance, and visual art? The performing arts for me were a way of maintaining my freedom and personal expression whether doing a dance on pointe, performing in the piano festival, or accompanying the church choir. Through the arts, I became part of a whole new community of people with whom I felt a sincere acceptance. I have believed all these years that by working as a music teacher with young people, I can assist them to develop similar feelings of freedom and belonging.

I became troubled when, during the course of my early career as a music teacher, I heard young people from the school participating in music-making activities who were not participating in the school music program. Watching these young people engage in musical performance passionately caused me to question my own practices. I wondered how I could help build relationships among students and between teacher and student through music-making or musicking (Small, 1998), to welcome these young musical lives into the classroom.

The research on the writing of the self into ethnography reveals that there are risks of reproducing narcissistic accounts of the field (Adkins, 2002; Coffey, 2002; May, 1998; Skeggs, 2002). Coffey (2002) stated, "The counterclaims of overindulgence and narcissism demand that the (re)production of the self with/in the text is critically examined, and (perhaps) approached with caution" (p. 314). Skeggs (2002) clarified the problem with ownership of the research,

saying that "the central point in all these accounts is how reflexivity becomes a property of the researcher's self *not* of the practice of the participants" (p. 359). Merely gathering rich descriptions of the music-making processes of young people in the school community was not enough to achieve a critical analysis of those institutional practices the students told me were oppressive. I needed to understand more fully my own involvement in such practices, and why they needed to be disrupted.

I was mindful throughout the study to critically analyze and understand the full context of my own music-making experiences to more fully welcome the musical lives of these young people into the Club. I used a technique in social science research called reflexivity. Adkins (2002) defined reflexive research as revealing the relationship between the "knower and the known" (p. 332). Research that is reflexive disrupts the hierarchy of speaking positions through viewing the researcher as one of many voices in the research community. The maestro in me had to step back from my position of authority in the music program and support the different ways many of these young people were already using music and the arts to express themselves. Although I had experienced music in many positive ways in my own life and felt I could convey my understanding to young people as the maestro, I stayed vigilant of the fact that these young people had their own personal experiences with music-making in the school and greater community. As I had grown up in a family of eclectic personalities, I believe I was equipped to meet this challenge and assist these young people to develop and enhance their unique musical ideas.

Coffey (2002) described a more self-conscious approach to ethnography which utilized dialogic processes to portray everyday events in the lives of people. These new forms of ethnography were found in "ethnodrama or ethnographic theater" (Coffey, 2002, p. 322).

However, the students and I were using music as the main media of expression. Therefore, I call this methodology, *ethnomusica*, a reflexive form of music-making which redresses hierarchies of speaking positions by focusing on the relationships which develop between musicians in the process of music-making. In this study, these relationships are developed among the students and between the students and me while trying to get a track to sound a certain way in the recording studio, working out accompaniment to a song in the music class, in jam sessions, in a local coffee shop during performances, and on stage in the school gym at the rock show. These interactions also took place in other spaces in which these musicians jammed and engaged in music-making in preparation for performances and recording.

Critical Institutional Ethnography and Musical Ruling Relations

Miss L: Do you think that maybe people are excluded from [pause] that there are voices that might be excluded from sort of more traditional type, um, ways of music-making in schools? Like more traditional school music? Do you think there are missing voices?

Magdalen: Absolutely. I mean as a person, that like, I can read some music, but you know, reading music isn't something I really do. So I've been excluded from a lot of professional choirs and stuff like that, and it's a shame because you know, I can sing and I know I can, and like, just because I can't read music doesn't mean I'm not as talented as they are. And it goes for a lot of other people here as well. I mean, there's a lot of, you know, rock sound in our, like Song Writer's. That doesn't mean they're not as talented as the man at the classical piano, you know. Everybody has different talents, and I don't think you are more talented just because you are technically quote "smarter."

To avoid the reinforcement of ideas drawn from my own musical background, I needed to be open to a critique from the students of the various ways of doing music education, as the dialogue above indicates. I encouraged the students to talk about how music could be done differently in schools. Critical institutional ethnography was one theoretical strand from which we drew to form the analysis that provides a means of pinpointing those aspects of music education which were unsettling to the students. We started with what Smith (2002) called a standpoint, "The central project is one of inquiry which begins with the issues and problems of people's lives and develops inquiry from the standpoint of their experience in and of the actualities of their everyday living" (p. 18). Through participating in the Song Writer's Club, students who had been involved in and/or excluded from school music for particular reasons, had developed ideas about music education that they felt needed to be voiced and put into practice.Within the tradition of institutional ethnography, change was possible through our identifying those oppressions or "ruling relations" acting upon young people in music education:

> The ruling relations are those that coordinate our doings and work in particular local sites with the doings and work of others elsewhere and at different times; they coordinate trans-locally; they are objectified, in the sense that they cannot be identified with particular individuals; and finally, and perhaps most importantly, they are based in and mediated by texts – printed, written, electronic, film, television, audio and so on (Smith, 2006b, p. 19).

The institution was not bound by geographical space, "in contrast to such concepts as bureaucracy, 'institution' does not identify a determinate form of social organization, but rather the intersection and coordination of more than one relational mode of ruling apparatus" (Smith, 1987, p. 160). The musical ruling relations acting upon young people in school and society, as

expressed by the students to me throughout the study, come from commercial sources; most prominently, the music industry, and through the interpretation of the western art model of music education in schools. Through jamming, performing, and recording their music, the students were better able to understand and interrogate those musical ruling relations that acted upon them during their music-making processes.

I noted earlier in my time in the field that many of the diverse young musicians in the school were not participating in formal school music programs. In one instance, a student from the First Nations community told me with his head hanging, "I know that white people sing better than natives, Miss." A feeling of horror overtook me as I realized that something within the music program did not seem to be addressing his particular creative abilities. Similarly, I observed that students from the Black community hardly participated in school music programs. I was deeply troubled by the lack of engagement of diverse young people in the music program. I began to think about the relationships built through music-making described by Small (1998). I believed there was something lacking in my approach to teaching the curriculum to the students that was connected to how I related to them and how they related to one another in a traditional ensemble. I sensed many students did not have a feeling of familiarity with musicking in this particular formal music setting. If this was true, students did not have the experiences in school necessary to create something new in that space (Dewey, 1934).

I believed the traditional ensemble practices, which were out of sync with the musical lives of students, extended well beyond students of ethnic or racial minorities. Research in music education indicated the musical ruling relations perpetuated in part by formal music education practices created a bifurcation between the music students experienced in and out of school (Cavicchi, 2009; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003):

> Music institutions promote a means of 'being musical' which is quite narrowly defined when compared to the musical actions and experiences of most people as they wake, commute, work, shop, relax, and otherwise pass the time in a complex, modern society (Cavicchi, 2009, p. 99).

The gap of musical experience has troubled music educators in school music programs throughout Western society. As a remedy to the lack of student participation, music education theorists had proposed a music education that was "praxial" (Bowman, 2002; Elliott, 2005; Regelski & Gates, 2009). Bowman (2002) defined *praxis* as knowledge that is particular to each situation: "Praxis demands of the agent/knower a deep engagement or involvement, a high level of alertness, and a flexible responsiveness to changes in the experiential field" (p. 70). As such, a music education with young people would need to be relevant to their lives as they so often told me over the years. Early on in my career, I understood I needed to more closely examine the music young people were listening to and participating in to work with them for a better musical engagement in school music.

I observed a musical, counter-school culture in the students over the years. The description of counter-school culture by Willis (1977) appears to resemble closely, in musical form, the very same phenomenon in my own program, in that "the most basic, obvious, and explicit dimension of counter-school culture is entrenched general and personalized opposition to 'authority'" (p. 11). One young person, Angus, came to the school into the general music program from the nearby former coal mining town. Angus was into mainly metal music, and he continuously bombarded me with questions about music theory. I knew he was intrinsically musical, and I worked hard to assist him with his musical growth. Often, I found myself stopping the class in order to discuss the music in a different light as directed by this young

musician. I read endlessly and researched various genres of metal music. I was uncertain about whether or not I possessed the necessary qualities to effectively teach this student and others like him.

I found myself seeking out supplementary exercises for Angus that fit with his particular interests. He played mainly metal music in class for the first year and one half. However, I noticed his musical interests starting to branch out in grade 11. One day, I overheard him say to one of his friends, "You know, the classical music—it helps 'ya learn all 'a dem udder kinds 'a music." Even more noteworthy to me as a teacher was the fact that my own approaches seemed to be changing on a daily basis. For example, I grew more aware of the fact that many of the metal riffs in songs by the group Metallica were incredibly difficult and virtuosic. The skill to play some of these solos was comparable to those skills required to play difficult works of eurocentric Classical music prescribed by the curriculum. I developed a greater understanding as to why students often preferred to play challenging music from the various sub-genres of metal to light pop from the Top 40 charts, and I began assisting them to develop original works and arrangements of their music in various ensemble settings.

One day, I asked Angus if he would play with the concert band, and do "something different with the bass lines." He agreed, and joined the tuba player. The two of them seemed to get along just fine. I noticed the bass lines were not exactly what was on the page, but came to life. We took the band to a university workshop in Halifax. When asked by the clinician if he would like to study there the coming fall, Angus replied, "I'm hop'in to study music 'ventually, but I wanna do some extra study'in this year, t'a understand my theory better." Teachers in his other classes told me he played (unplugged) on his bass when he finished his class work. As he didn't seem to disrupt anyone else, they did not try to stop him. Little by little, his grades

elevated until he was passing every course. He started working, saved his money, and took private theory instruction with a local music instructor. Later the following year, Angus successfully passed an audition into a post-secondary institution to pursue music, one of the very few successful string bass applicants on the Eastern seaboard.

Johnson (2006) described metal music in the following manner: "blitzkrieg guitar, banshee vocals, and a weird mix of satanic posturing and proletarian pomp" (p. 53). In *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey*, Dunn, McFayden, & Wise(2006) portrayed the musical ruling relations of heavy metal as obsessed with "sex, religion, violence and death." From my time talking with students in the field, I believe this music had become embedded in their lives through sources such as the Internet, radio, and television. In the Song Writer's Club, The Ocelots wrote songs in a genre very close to metal, which dealt with the whole notion of suicide and the difficulties young people were having in today's world. From my earlier experience with Angus, I took care that these students' voices were heard in the Club through their recording processes. I also spoke with them regularly about their songs to understand the darkness they depicted.

I noticed that students in the general music classes frequently resisted traditional ensemble practices of the school band and choir. In fact, the general music classes were comprised of many students who had withdrawn from band and choir at various points in their schooling. They articulated to me as the music teacher, the desire to express their musical ideas in a more independent, personalized fashion. I looked more closely into the model of instrumental music from an historical point of view to understand how the programs had developed in the schools in the region. Instrumental music programs originated from imperialist models such as the citizen band model of the late 19th century, which was the norm for that time in Cape Breton (O'Shea, 1991). This model has persisted through to the present day as can be

seen by the prevalence of traditional instrumental band programs throughout the province of Nova Scotia. I knew from teaching these programs myself that students were screened in grades four and five before being permitted to participate in these programs. When I reflected back on the story of the bass player, I realized as a music educator that these programs were often too narrow to meet the musical needs of all young people. If the definition of musical praxialism was applied here, one could say that I needed to change the music program to become relevant to the lives of my students.

In the Song Writer's Club changes to music education were envisioned and put into practice "*with, for* and *by*" these young people themselves as Tilleczek (2011) has suggested of youth-attuned praxis. Through jamming, recording, and performing, these young people made audible those musical ruling relations of the traditional, Western, eurocentric model of music education. Their radical musicking continued to push me to change my view of music education by working to improve my practice.

Thinking through the musical ruling relations within traditional ensemble practices as expressed by the students, I began to think about the musical interests of the students which moved away from the uniformity of the school band and choral models. Gaztambide-Fernández (2010) articulated how problems surrounding Western music education practices were due in part to the emphasis placed on the "musical genius." As a result of our emphasis placed on the musical genius in Western music education, the concept of inclusion or social justice through music education was vastly out of sync with its intrinsic goal: to produce musicians. Interpreting the music curriculum through processes and practices which developed the musician excluded many students from participating in school music programs (Cavicchi, 2009; Seddon, 2004). Gaztambide-Fernández (2010) stated that in order to embrace issues of social justice through

music-making, there needed to be a shift away from the musician as the center of music-making toward a more relational ontology. Thinking about this idea, I spoke with the students: They revealed their many interests as musicians and artists that did not necessarily center on playing an instrument on stage, for instance. We worked to try and bring some of their ideas forward in the dissertation research. For example, Eoin and Matt acted as video/audio technicians and musicians for the dissertation research, Eli helped with the interviews and data collection, and Grace and Ryan acted as sessional musicians and emcees. By making visible and audible those narrow notions of the musician through discussion and action in the Song Writer's Club, we worked towards achieving more inclusive practices in the Club.

Critical Pedagogy and Playing Outside the Box

> Magdalen: Personally, I think here, at this school we can completely break that tradition [traditional ensemble practice in school music]. I mean look at our choir [We both laugh]! And at Song Writer's like I said, so much sound and nobody's in their seats and all you know, pushed up like this [emulating what it's like to be in your seat working all day]. And [laughing], but I mean, I don't know. I feel like there's a lot of soul here, and I feel like that's what the other schools lack [We both laugh again]. Like, I don't want [pause], it's true, and like, I understand that music is educational and there is a form of educational music like you do in Music IB and stuff like that.
>
> Miss L: Right.
>
> Magdalen: But at the same time, music is all about . . . you know, people expressing.
>
> Miss L: Now, is that not educational, too?

Magdalen: It's extremely educational. I gotta say I learn more in here than I do in any other class.

To further problematize the nature of music education's institutional practices, we used analytical tools drawn from critical pedagogy (Abrahams, 2005, 2010; Giroux, 1994; Smyth, 2011). Critical pedagogy is a set of practices that makes the assumption that students enter learning situations with knowledge drawn from their own worlds and experiences. Therefore, teaching and learning processes are co-constructed by teacher and student. The foundations and authority upon which teaching and learning occur were called into question in the dissertation research as students engaged in meaningful activities which they discussed and had a direct role in creating:

> By refuting the objectivity of knowledge and asserting the partiality of all forms of pedagogical authority, critical pedagogy initiates an inquiry into the relationship between the form and content of various pedagogical sites and the authority they legitimate in securing particular cultural practices (Giroux, 1994, p. 284).

This inquiry opened up a discursive learning space to practices that were potentially liberating. The authority spoken of by Giroux was reinforced by the teacher and problematized through critical pedagogy in ways that brought student voices into the center of teaching and learning. Abrahams (2005) discussed how applying critical pedagogy into the field of music education unsettles the binaries between teacher and student in that "it advocates a shift in the power relationships within the music classroom by suggesting that teachers and students teach each other" (p. 19). Examining my role as the maestro was an important part of the process of welcoming such questions into the music class, and therefore into the site of the dissertation research. As the maestro, I had been one of the watchdogs of the Western music education

paradigm, and the students I had spoken with over the years had many opinions and ideas of what constituted a good music teacher. Repeatedly, students spoke of struggles they had experienced with maestros during their years spent playing and singing in school ensembles. Examining the research within this paradigm reveals how very damaging the effects of this style of teaching and teacher could be to young lives:

> These three factors—the sense of privilege in associating with someone perceived as important, the apparent (but highly ambiguous) concern for individual students' success and development, and the authoritarian (even totalitarian) style of teaching—are all likely to affect students' perceptions. In other words, abusive maestro behavior is likely to be accepted simply because "this is the way it should be" (Persson, 2000, p. 34).

As a band conductor, *I* selected the repertoire. *I* decided how the music was approached. *I* decided where and when the performances would be held. According to the basic concepts of critical pedagogy, this way of functioning needed to be radically altered. Allsup and Benedict (2008) urged band directors to find a way to develop a vision of the musical ensemble with their students. As such, teachers of band were encouraged to welcome new traditions of ensemble practice into the teaching and learning of instrumental music. But the authors recognized there were real barriers to change due to the mindset of band directors towards "obedience" (p. 168). When I became more aware of the ways young people experienced music in their own lives, I felt a more radical approach was needed to get past narrow, authoritative interpretations of music education fostered in my own training.

Dialogue with the students was foundational to the radicalization of my own teaching and learning practices. Freire (1974) has stated that "only dialogue truly communicates"

(p. 40). In the process of our teacher-student dialogue, I felt myself moving further away from the podium to clear a space for these young people to share power in decisions on their music-making. This ontological and epistemological shift in my practice started a process aimed in part to erase teacher-student binaries, as well as to welcome more youth-attuned teaching and learning practices. The students became co-constructors of the teaching and learning processes in the Song Writer's Club:

> Miss L: Um, now what do you think needs to be done in the Club itself? Like how do you take this idea of how you work within your small groups and apply it to the larger setting? You know, what would you like to see now to build on this concept? What would you like to see happen in the Club? How can we improve it?
>
> Alexis: Well, there's like [pause] it would be nice if people instead of getting in their own little groups, if we all had like a circle, and all put in our own ideas, and all had like a little jam session. Like a songwriter's circle. I think that would be really cool, because when we come here we all go off on our own groups.
>
> Miss L: Right.
>
> Alexis: That's what we usually do. And then we'll have like some people go perform, but like if we just had a little circle or something, and just everybody kinda just had fun.
>
> Miss L: Kinda like how we started off?
>
> Alexis: Yeah. Exactly.
>
> Miss L: OK. So, revisit.
>
> Alexis: Because everybody has different ideas that can contribute.
>
> Miss L: More sharing?

Alexis: Yeah.

This dialogue is taken from one of my interviews with Song Writer's Club participant, Alexis. The reader can see how we shared or co-constructed insights into teaching and learning within the whole group. In this interaction, I picked up on the fact that in addition to the usual informal learning groups in the Club, Alexis wanted to hear more from the whole group to move forward with her own music-making. This conversation and others like it gave rise to a talking circle in our Club, as well as more song and sharing circles.

The kind of listening which assures students that the teacher is actively seeking a solution to a concern, or collaborating with them to building an idea, is for the purpose of change. I call this kind of listening transformative. Listening is important, but listening with the intention to act and bring about change through collaboration, is quite another matter. As the Song Writer's Club progressed through the year, this kind of transformative listening became indispensable to building a bridge between the maestro and the students and between the students themselves. Such bridges became the basis for further action as the Club took on a life of its own. As my assumptions about teaching and learning of music were challenged, I noticed new soloists and ensembles came forth in the Song Writer's Club. The classroom became a site of informal learning groups each week after school where students collaborated to write songs and jam together (Green, 2001, 2008). In some instances, students who may not have ever participated in school music prior to becoming part of the Club had a space to develop and enhance their music with others as they expressed to me.

Through transformative listening, I helped shape the learning experiences of young people in the way in which Dewey (1938) suggested. However, in a reciprocal fashion, the young people with whom I collaborated equally shaped my work. For example, my musical

training on piano placed a great deal of emphasis on voicing. Particularly in pieces from the Baroque period, the ability to emphasize one voice over another is crucial to hear the development of the main theme in the music. When I introduced the idea of voicing into my classes, I noticed early in my career that the guitarists in my general music classes were able to grasp this idea right away. I noticed how they were able to voice their music quite naturally when they played their own repertoire. For example, I noticed that students voiced the chords and main melody of "Smoke on the Water" by Deep Purple on their electric guitars in a way that brought out the important notes in the chords and melody.

A second musical concept, which the guitar students in my general classes had mastered on their own, was phrasing. This is the idea that music is going somewhere. Through changing the dynamics, articulation, tempo, meter, rhythm, and so on, the musician interprets the music to maintain the interest of the listener. Crescendos and diminuendos, varying the articulation of the individual notes, and changes in the tempo moved the music forward and give it life. I noticed over and over again how musicians within my general music classes had a natural sense of phrasing in the way they played their music.

Listening to how the students had developed a mastery of musical voicing and phrasing on their own, through listening, jamming, performing, and experiencing music in their worlds caused me to ask myself a critical question: If students were already mastering some very difficult musical ideas on their own, was I training the music out of them through traditional ensemble practice? I knew I needed to find a way to work with the students to welcome their musical ideas into the classroom.

Cook-Sather (2002, 2006) advocated for approaches and policies in education that were based in active listening. Cook-Sather (2006) promoted a paradoxical model for pre-service

teachers that emphasized student voice in teaching and learning practices. Roles of the teacher and student that arose from this model "contradict traditional models of leadership and model a new way of teaching, learning, and leading" (p. 355). I was greatly aware of this contradiction as the project unfolded, but remained open to change and transformation as a music educator of young people with their own ideas of how music education can be done differently.

Disrupting the maestro revealed my own vulnerability to the students. I did not have all the answers. I did not know everything. I was not the only power in control of the Club. This power was to be shared among all the Club members. I believe that by showing my vulnerability to the students, the Club grew. Students developed the confidence to perform and share their work with others little by little. Friesen (2009) recounted the story of how he was able to instill confidence in his students by showing his own vulnerability as a teacher during improvisation exercises. He stated, "teachers can be vulnerable too, and it was hoped that this move toward distributing power more equally will give students more confidence to explore their own creativity in front of others" (p. 255). Allowing students to hear and see the maestro without all the answers was a source of great discomfort to me, oftentimes, as I believe would be the case with most music educators. But such discomfort was needed to collaborate with students to produce a richer engagement and presence of their music-making processes in the Song Writer's Club.

Performance Ethnography

Theoretical strands, derived from youth studies, critical institutional ethnography, and critical pedagogy are quite diverse. In order to gather evidence of the disruption of traditional teaching and learning practices as informed by such different theories, elements of performance ethnography were infused into the methodology of the Club. Alexander (2005) defined

performance ethnography as, "literally the staged re-enactment of ethnographically derived notes. This approach to studying and staging culture works toward lessening the gap between a perceived and actualized sense of self and the other" (p. 411). As a collaborator in the production of the musical performances of the Song Writer's Club, I was able to understand how the students created and communicated music in their worlds. At times, I was fortunate enough to be asked to participate in the musical performances as an accompanist, which gave me a bird's eye view into the musical worlds of these young people, and allowed me to understand some of the many ways they constructed their music. I became less involved in my own notions of how musical performances in music education should be, and more open to student interpretations of music-making. The performance was only one part of their musicking processes, which also included jamming, songwriting, and recording.

Fabian (1990) made the distinction between performance ethnography that is performative from more traditional forms of ethnography, which were informative (p. 21). Fabian saw two main flaws with drama and theater performances: *positivity*, or the privileging of dominant points of view (p. 16), and *political naïveté,* defined as a lack of awareness of dramatists for how their work could be used by oppressors to control others (p. 17). When performers strictly adhered to prescribed texts, their insights could be taken by anyone and used to serve their own ends. As a result, the original meaning of the writer became lost. This was the exact phenomenon spoken about by Dewey (1938) who felt the need to return to an understanding of the authentic experience of creating art by appreciating an aesthetic in the raw.

Performance, for Fabian (1990) was "making, fashioning, creating" (p. 13), not recreating a dramatic work from a script in the same way, repeatedly. Furthermore, the audience needed to take note of the "aleatory, artistic, and therefore unpredictable, and, indeed to the devious,

dissimulating potential of cultural expression" (p. 38). True performance ethnography unfolded as people worked to interpret life events and ideas in highly creative fashions. In one of the songs by the group Yelling in the Color Yellow, the lead singer interpreted the meaning of the song for the listener. Specifically, Cyrus mentions that "Angst 4" is one in a series of "angsty" songs. One could hear the unfolding of a feeling of anxiety with the repeated chord throughout the entire song, and in the hushed tone of the main singer. Through musical performance, this group revealed something deeply personal about their lives. As the reader/listener now listens to this track, she/he will gain an insight into the world of these young people in their state of angst at that particular moment. Such strong emotions bring the listener closer to the world of the performer, which is the aim of performance ethnography.

Approaches to Analysis

My greatest concern in using reflexive methods when gathering data was in how to avoid producing analysis which was dominated by my own researcher voice, as I voiced earlier in this chapter. Atkinson and Delamont (2005) discussed the importance for ethnographers to pay attention to the symbols and forms artifacts take in the cultural context in which they are immersed. "Holistic analysis would refer to *preserving* those forms that are indigenous to the culture in question rather than collapsing them into an undifferentiated plenum" (p.824). The performed audiovisual data gathered by the students with my help was laden with symbolic meaning representing the multiple perspectives of the students pertaining to music education and education in general. The reflexive nature of the dissertation research cleared a space for these diverse ideas to be expressed. The interviews themselves produced an opportunity for another layer of analysis by the students who had the opportunity to discuss their music-making processes with me. The challenge was for us to collaborate to analyze this rich data set and

convey its meaning to the reader in the dissertation itself. Originally, I had intended to code and theme the interview data (Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Saldaña, 2009). Saldaña (2009) defines coding in the following manner, "To codify is to arrange things in a systematic order, to make something part of a system or classification, to categorize" (p. 8). However, after reading through the transcripts several times and beginning this process, I discovered that a traditional approach to coding and theming was not the best means of analysis. It contradicted the need for a holistic analysis congruent with an understanding of youth culture as multipled and varied from one young person to the next. I needed to find a means of looking more broadly at the themes emerging from these students; many of whom I had already developed a rapport with as their music teacher. In their interviews, the students themselves frequently blurred the boundaries between one theme and another. There was simply too much overlap to create distinct codes and categories.

One useful analytic approach was performative. The interviews themselves are a kind of performance, and were part of the entire performance production process. These interviews provided the students with opportunities to unpack their ideas with me, the teacher. They often represented important links in the chain of meaning making for students who might not have had the chance to reflect on and discuss their musicking with me prior to now. In the interviews, I encouraged students to continue the conversations among themselves, and to work towards constant collaboration, critique, and improvement.

The musical performances of the students occurred in places where they enjoyed being: in the jam spaces of the music room, in the recording studio, on stage in the school gym at the Rock Show, and on stage at a local community venue. We developed a themed EP (extended play album), complete with a slam poem written by one of the students, and a CD cover designed

by a parent who had hosted many of the students in her home for jam sessions. The students, assisted by me, worked out how they wanted the music to sound to share with their friends and families in the many musical, youthful spaces we had nurtured during the year. Their studio/video recordings and performances, images, and interview clips found on the Sydney Academy Song Writer's Club website, are a rich, performative analysis formed by the students themselves with my collaboration.

Our methods of writing songs truly became our methods or processes of engaging in the dissertation research itself. In the improvised, layered, collaborative fashion in which the students wrote songs, so too did we continuously dialogue and bounce ideas off one another during the whole performance-production process. The recorded song compositions, videos, stories, and interviews in this dissertation gathered by the students and me comprised rich data sets for ongoing analysis. Emphasizing how their contributions might help shape educational theories in engagement especially for music education seemed to provide an incentive for the students to speak freely about and explore through musical performance, their music-making experiences in and out of school, as well as the role of their music-making in their overall engagement in school.

Summary: Mixed, Musical, Youth-attuned Teaching and Learning Methodology

The methodology used in the dissertation work was more appropriately an interwoven set of approaches to praxis "*with*, *for*, and *by* youth" (Tilleczek 2011, 2014). This chapter has outlined the particular theoretical strands that came together to formulate methodological approaches that were reflexive, critical, dialogic, and performative. Through teacher-student collaboration, we focused on how to enhance and improve the music-making processes in the Song Writer's Club,

including, jamming, dialogue, set-up, recording, reflecting, writing, and performing. Each process provided moments of insight into doing music education differently.

As Fabian (1990) addressed in his distinction between the performative and informative, there is a tension between the utopia created by the performers when on stage and more scientific discourses which seek finite answers to research questions. Performers lay aside their critiques to understand the world as a set of emergent phenomena through the eyes and ears of their characters, artistic selves, and so on. The more rational social scientific researchers tend to enter the field with a set of theories that inform what they find. The tension between the artistic and scientific methodological traditions was not something I felt needed resolving. Instead, I was curious to see how the students operating in seemingly oppositional paradigms might work to create new knowledge (Dewey, 1934).

To assist them with their music-making, I nurtured with them an open-minded and non-judgmental environment. I hoped students felt comfortable to express their critiques; for example, of music education practices and the music industry, no matter how controversial. At the same time, they were encouraged to keep an open mind towards different ways of viewing the world and participating in music-making. I would not say we were without conflict, but there was a firm basis for the resolution of our differences. At the end of the 10 month period of data collection, all 30 students who had joined the Club, remained.

The methodology was not to be confused with a set of fixed principles. It was a collection of creative, musical expressions and processes set in motion by a creative group of young people in search of meaning, with the help of the teacher. The research questions concerned how to "do" music education in relevant, youthful ways. Thus, it stands to reason that the answers to the research questions lie in the doing of the music itself, in reflecting,

conversing, and performing. The different interpretations of music education transformed how we understood music and music education. Chapters 5 through 7 describe, in the words of students, the many moments of change and transformation that came about through their performed, musicking processes. As for the maestro, the entire experience of this dissertation research with these students figured prominently in the disruption of my approaches to teaching and working with young people.

Chapter 3: Youthful, Tuneful Analysis

> Rick: There's not a manual for writing a song. Like someone could give you tips on how to write a song, but you can't go and buy a book. You could, I'm sure, but it wouldn't be the same if you go and buy a book. How to write a song—there's no standard procedure to writing music. It's art. The way I see art: art is just someone's; your opinion [pause]. So basically just yourself you're putting to music, or a picture, or anything [pause] any kind of art, films.

This chapter outlines how the students contributed to the research methods through their songwriting. It also begins to present some of the results arising from these processes. Given the methodological fusion described in Chapter 2, it is not surprising that the results and methods are closely intertwined. To this end, this chapter provides further insight into what we did and what resulted from our collective musical doings. The dissertation research gathered evidence of the art of human experience, as well as the human experience of art (Janesick, 2008, p. 478), through audio and video recording processes, image gathering, interviews, dialogues, and field notes. To better understand the nature of student musical engagement, we worked to collect evidence of musical experiences of the students in the Club in their many forms (Dewey, 1938). The students and I documented those moments of the product, as well as the process of musical production in studio of these young people, in an artful fashion. Our methods were more appropriately processes that we engaged in. The songwriting processes as voiced by the students were research processes in and of themselves, and were drawn from our critical, reflexive, dialogic, emergent methodological approaches described in Chapter 2.

When the Club first began, I had firm beliefs as to how a songwriting session should unfold. From working with the students, I thought about using a hooks approach to writing songs. A hook is defined by Ewer (2010) in the following manner:

> It can be a part of the melody, the lyric, the harmony, or some combination of any of these aspects. More often than not, hooks appear in choruses. Whatever the songwriter has done to set the chorus words is often a hook (p 161).

Talking with the students in my school context, I found they had developed their own terminology for songwriting. For instance many of them called the parts of the songs, which they wrote by ear, riffs instead of hooks. A riff could be a chorus, verse, bridge, intro, outro, break, breakdown, and so on as they described to me. After working with these young people and many others over the past twenty years, I developed a sense of how they used these terms to talk about their music.

To clarify for the reader who might not know some of these terms, intro for these students is short for introduction to a song. Usually, this is instrumental. The outro is the portion of the song that plays out until the end of song, usually after the final chorus. Again, normally the outro is instrumental. Breaks are short, instrumental breaks in between parts of the verses, or between verses and the chorus. They provide a musical pause. Breakdowns are longer than breaks. They are improvised solos which occur usually between verses and the chorus and/or chorus and the bridge. The bridge is a change in the music, usually moving into the chorus, which expresses a new musical idea (chord progression, rhythm, and so on). The bridge usually leads the listener into the final chorus, although it can occur earlier on in the song. I encouraged the students to keep track of those little tunes or riffs they thought up which bounced around in their heads during the course of the day. If they had a cell phone, for instance, I

discussed with them how to find a quiet spot for a moment or two to record the tune, and to take a moment or two to write out the lyrics as they entered their heads.

There is very little literature on songwriting. Most of it concerned the basics of standard chord progressions (Ewer, 2006, 2008), harmonies (Ewer, 2007a), and how to write lyrics and melodies with popular appeal (Ewer, 2007a, 2007b, 2010). One piece of literature caught my attention in particular; it was not prescriptive and therefore lent itself to various youthful, interpretations of song writing methods. It was a source which tried to assist new and developing artists to let go of their inhibitions when improvising and writing songs for the first time (Coryat & Dobson, 2006). Of the literature I had been reading, this seemed to fit well with what I saw during our first meeting. I had heard students speak about their inhibitions composing over the years, and I was interested in finding ways to help them jump over their hurdles. When I heard the different genres of songs the students were making, I wanted to support the development of their ideas.

Composing Research Processes

The research indicated that young people were drawn to informal and popular learning models of music education (de Bézenac & Swindells, 2009; Gouzouasis, 2005; Green, 2001, 2002, 2008; Isbell, 2007; Lebler, 2008; Senyshyn, 2004; Webb, 2007). For the 28 students who had already studied music with me at the school, they had already gained some experience in forming smaller, informal learning groups to write and arrange songs of their own as part of the course outcomes. For instance, in my instrumental, vocal, and general classes, I assigned at least one project to be completed in small groups. Students chose to cover a song or to write a song of their own, arranged in small groups. After completing the song, they presented it either for the whole class, or for a smaller group of their peers. After our first brief discussion, the students in

the Song Writer's Club broke into smaller informal learning groups in order to begin to jam, and brainstorm song ideas. They played a mixture of cover songs of familiar tunes and original songs they were interested in working on and developing further. Mid-way through the first session, we gathered together for a brief songwriter's circle. I was amazed at their music-making processes. I was not seeing the inhibitions I had expected. Students were sharing lyrics and chord progressions they had written before the first meeting, visiting the Internet on the class computers to check out tabs, and jamming out original tunes right from the start. There were elements of these processes that were common to almost all of the students. Most if not all of the students wrote songs outside the tradition of standard notation just as Gaare (1997) and Lawson (2010) have suggested. The students were able to express their musical ideas in their own voices through these methods of notation: (a) lyrics (see Figure 4) with the tune emerging from themselves or another group member separately, (b) chord sheets for instrumentalists (see Figure 5), and (c) a combination of both (see Figures 6 and 7).

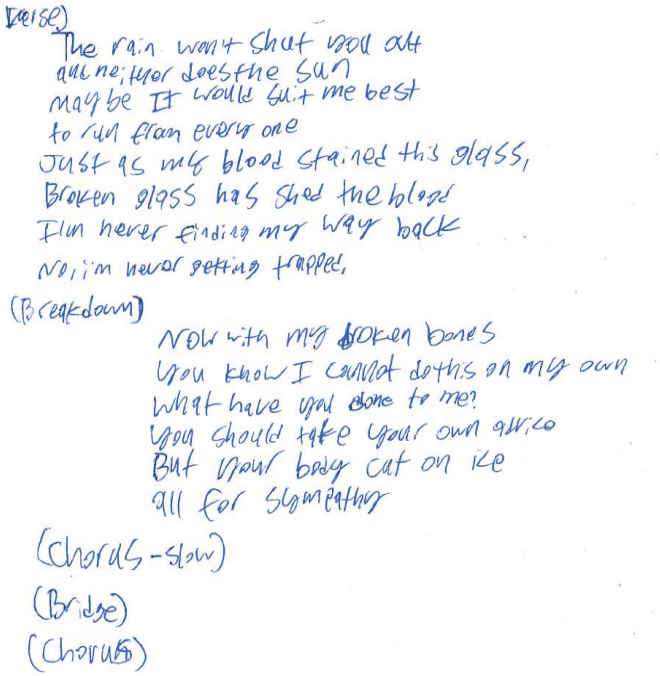
(Verse)
The rain won't shut you out
and neither does the sun
may be It would suit me best
to run from every one
Just as my blood stained this glass,
Broken glass has shed the blood
I'm never finding my way back
No, i'm never getting trapped,
(Breakdown)
Now with my broken bones
You know I cannot do this on my own
What have you done to me?
You should take your own advice
But your body cut on ice
all for Stigmatism
(Chorus - slow)
(Bridge)
(Chorus)

Figure 4. Lyric sheet for "Hallelus and Power Woos" by The Ocelots. Lyrics for a song written by a member of one of the bands participating in the Club. Contains lyrics and structure of the song.

Angst 4: December

A(8 beats) D(8 beats)

Keep Going, until, I play on D at a much faster tempo. Then:

A(16 beats, fast) D(16 Beats, fast)

Play these chords until I hit an unusually high note, and hold the D an extra few beats. I will stop for 8 beats, then hit an A to finish the song.

Figure 5. Chord progression for "Angst 2" and "Angst 4" type-written by Cyrus. Chords and structure of a song written by one of the students in a band. Comprised of guitar chords, counts, cues for the singer, and directions for the band members.

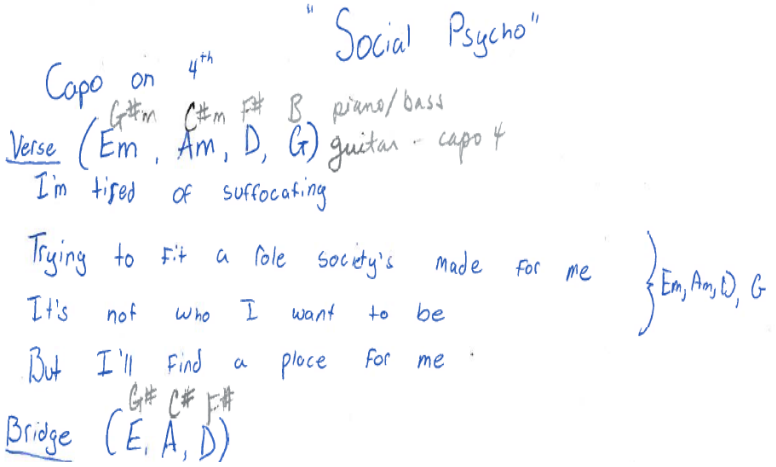

Figure 6. Lyrics, song structure, and chords for guitar or piano. Chords written by the student are in parentheses. Chords written in pencil above these chords were written by me as the student looked for a key which was suitable for his voice.

As the reader can see from these examples, the students already had a sense of the lyrics, form (intro, verse, refrain, bridge, breakdown, outro, and so on), structure (melody, harmony/chord structures), and other musical elements they wished to bring into their music. This was a highly emergent process. Students would take the riffs written by one another, and assist each other to develop them further. If someone heard another guitar line, or another vocal

harmony, they would add it to the basic song. Each song would build as various students jammed it out. The lyrics generated by the students dealt with themes relevant to their lives (see Figures 4, 6, and 7). This insight came from a conversation that took place at one of the Club meetings during the second semester of the year of data collection. One research participant, Ché, declared in the winter of 2013 that the real theme of the Club concerned the pressures felt by young people in school and society. When I asked the group what these pressures were, the students reported on the pressures to fit in with their peers, to look a certain way, to form good relationships, to be successful in school, and to live up to the expectations of adults. I could hear these kinds of pressures being depicted in the lyrics of the songs the students composed:

> I'm tired of suffocating,
>
> Trying to fit in role society's made for me,
>
> It's not who I want to be,
>
> But I'll find a place for me . . .
>
> (From "Social Psycho," by Jeremy)

> I've got a knack for bad decisions, and a brand new start,
>
> With legacies and neurosis, always showing all my scars,
>
> Because I've been sinking under, underneath and helpless,
>
> I will always show my teeth, I should be making progress;
>
> Everything I do, just tells me that I can't do a thing,
>
> Just cut ties to the anchor, and maybe I won't sink,
>
> Everything I talk about now, is angry about now,
>
> Not looking into brighter times, good buried under ground.
>
> (From "Hallelus and Power Woos," by Matt of The Ocelots)

If you'd open your heart to me,

I could be your shelter,

Please just let me take you by the hand,

And you could have this heart to sever.

(From "Waning Crescent," by Brittany)

When I asked the students about their songs, they told me they were "venting," "expressing themselves," "expressing their feelings," and that they "felt better" through writing and performing their songs for the peers and others. Over the years, I had been told countless times by students that music class helped them get through their day at school. My observation with the students was supported by the research which stated that individuals used musical expression to address their emotional needs in an aesthetic manner through providing a medium for the development of aesthetic agency (DeNora, 2000, 2001): "Music is a material that actors use to elaborate, to fill out and fill in, to themselves and to others, modes of aesthetic agency and, with it, subjective stances and identities" (DeNora, 2000, p, 74).

In a qualitative study conducted by Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) with eight adolescents, music was found to be employed by the young people to stabilize their moods, and "offered the adolescents resources for increasing and restoring well-being, and made their emotional life more varied and colourful" (p. 105). From what the students were telling me, this was how they were using their music and musical performances; that is, as a way of coping with stress and expressing to others how they felt about events in their lives.

I was concerned by the research indicating young people could become more depressed by listening to and participating in music which was dark and depressing (Garrido & Schubert, 2013; Miranda & Claes, 2009; Thomson, Reece, & Di Benedetto, 2014). Although these studies

suggested high levels of venting through music are linked to high levels of anxiety and stress, Thomson et al. (2014) indicated more research was needed in this area. In their study, they found it was likely that young people were using music to reduce stress and anxiety. As the researcher and teacher, my aim in the Club was not to disrupt the music-making processes of these young people. I did, however, maintain open communications through listening and dialogue with the students for concerns in their lives that surfaced during the musical performance/production process. Throughout the interviews, the students spoke of the need for opportunities for songwriting and other creative endeavors in school that allow young people to express themselves and tell people who they were.

When I placed my support behind the students for their continued development of unique musical compositions, I received a surprise. The maestro in me was baffled. Many of the students did not need my help in the way in which I had become accustomed with the school band and choir. They directed their own jam sessions. They critiqued one another with ease. I often noticed how the students were able to hear missing chord progressions and harmonies with which I was not familiar. They were hearing the music in a different manner from me. I tried as much as possible *not* to interrupt their music-making sessions. When they needed help or an idea, they would come to me. But for the most part, the Club seemed to run itself.

I remember very clearly the day Brittany asked me for help with her song. She wrote the lyrics and had the tune in her head, but she needed help with the chords. She asked me if I would develop a part for the piano to accompany her. "Of course!" I replied. (At last, I was *truly* needed.) She sang her song in low tones, and I matched her pitches initially, and found a chord progression on the piano to suit the style of her song. Brittany told me she wrote "Pagan Folk Art," which contained a lot of imagery from nature. So I chose a style of chording to

emulate the sound of running water, which was pleasing to Brittany. However, Brittany changed the song's structure as we worked out the song. I covered her lyric sheet with written chords and then markings by both of us to indicate when to change up the music (see Figure 7).

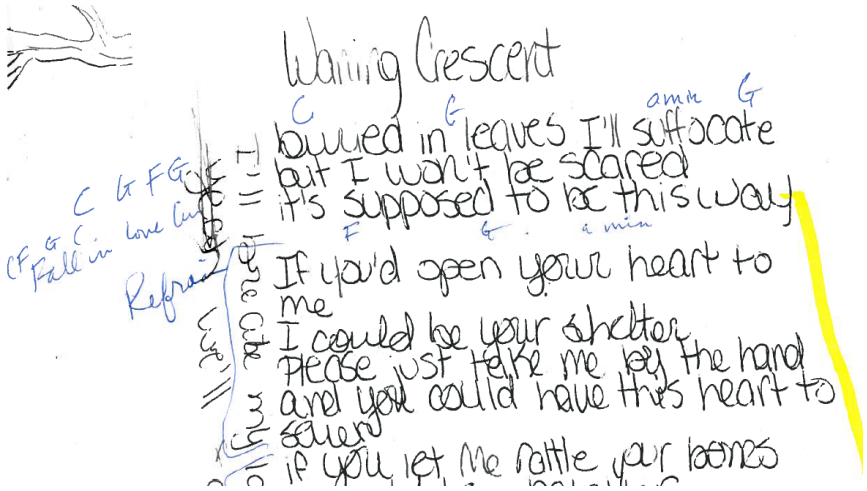

Figure 7. Lyrics and chord progression. Lyrics and melody written by the student with accompaniment written by me to match her melody. Other markings indicate the timing of the chords to synchronize them with the lyrics.

The students were encouraged to reflect, dialogue, and give feedback to one another online through such social media sites as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, in order to make improvements to the Club on an ongoing basis. This is not to say they did not use other forms of social media, such as Snapchat. School-board guidelines prohibited me from communicating with the students through social media, but the students emailed me on a regular basis with any questions they had, and had the opportunity to speak with me and with one another at the after-school meetings. Although I may not have always had the up-to-the-minute details of what was happening in the Club, I was reassured by members of the Club "not to worry" on an ongoing basis. I was assured that if anything of great concern came up, the students would "let me know." In the end, especially after all the interviews were complete, I felt convinced that the students and I had truly collaborated more efficiently than was the case in our traditional ensembles.

My Researcher Presence

My role as arts educator, my constant reflexivity, and turning away from the maestro had everything to do with my decision to take an interpretive stance towards my research. Janesick (2008) depicted art making as an experience as opposed to a single performance, event, or separate piece of artwork. Drawing on the principles of aesthetics described by John Dewey and Erick Hawkins, Janesick (2008) clarified how researchers in art-based paradigms were not neutral, and must not separate art from the experience of making art. Similarly, the various moments of the music-making processes documented by these young people truly represented their artful experiences engaged in the dissertation research. To relate their music-making experiences to others through the writing of the dissertation, interpretivist approaches would help the data sing in the voices of the students themselves.

My role fused elements of "artist-researcher-teacher" (Gouzouasis, 2008; Irwin et al., 2008) with that of participant-observer (Green, 2001, 2008). Students formed informal learning groups at which time they jammed and wrote songs together. When I was not discussing music with the students, or accompanying/jamming with them, I quietly observed their methods of writing, recording, and producing songs as much as possible. My many roles were contiguous in the sense that after a while, I felt more of an overlap and blend across these diverse research modes (Gouzouasis, 2008; Irwin et al., 2008).

Lucy Green (2008) conducted a lengthy study of informal learning groups inside music classrooms in the UK. In her study were a number of participant observers who worked with the students in the classroom, but not as music teachers. When the time arrived to interview the students, complications arose:

> There are obvious disadvantages to interviewing people as part of research, and particularly when the interviewers have previously been working alongside them as participant observers. Both pupils and teachers may have wanted to avoid saying negative things in case of upsetting the interviewers. They may also felt pressure from peers and others to appear supportive rather than critical (p. 17).

I knew, as did the students, that the maestro was still present. Therefore, the interview data must be read with a critical eye, knowing some students may very well have said things to "please the teacher." I reminded the students constantly to speak honestly and freely with me. If our aim was to make the Club better, we needed the honest opinions of everyone involved! Having performances in venues outside the school also provided me with the opportunity to talk with the students in a different setting. During those times, we were able to gain a different outlook towards the Club and its ideas, as students presented their musical work to the greater community and received feedback from family and friends.

Composing a Living Analysis

I observed how the students performed the data, and thought it would be meaningful to analyze the data in the dissertation research by drawing on my experiences as a musician and performer. This approach to analysis emerged from my reflections surrounding *a/r/tography* as a serious mode of inquiry in a musical research setting (Gouzouasis, 2006, 2008). "Contiguity exists between musician/researcher, teacher as well as between the practices of music-making, music researching, and music teaching" (Gouzouasis, 2006, p. 30). In a/r/tography, knowing, doing, and making come together in a living inquiry (Irwin et al., 2008). This inquiry unfolds through the continuous emergence of multiple forms of texts whose texture can be described as polyphonic, and that "this polyphony resists superficial, transparent deconstructions and binaries,

instead leading performers and audiences through complex processes of meaning making" (Gouzouasis, 2006, p. 29). Although one could assert that the musical performances by these young people were complex processes of meaning making, I had to also reflect on how to describe such processes for the reader of the dissertation. I chose to draw on my experiences as a pianist. I thought about how my artistic practice could help me collaborate with the students to interpret the lives of young people as "multilayered accounts of the social world" (Atkinson & Delamont, 2005, p. 828). In this way, a discursive space was opened up for the students and me to analyze music education and education in general from multiple perspectives.

In Chapters 5 to 7, I will describe the data by way of audiovisual texts, stories, and interviews in a *fugue-like* manner. The fugue is a form of polyphony spoken about in reference to social science research by Gouzouasis (2006, 2008). Gouzouasis (2006) indicated the value of fugue-like analysis as one that "resists superficial, transparent deconstructions and binaries, instead leading performers and audiences through complex processes of meaning making" (p. 29). A fugue is a multi-voiced piece of music whereby a subject or theme is clearly stated in one voice, developed further in that voice, and re-stated and developed in other voices. The reader will need to imagine the entry of the main theme in each of four voices in the case of a four-part fugue. The statement of the theme is clearly laid out at the beginning of the work. The notes on the score become more layered as the piece progresses. Each entry of the theme into the piece leads to the development of a kind of musical conversation between the four voices. Such conversations continue until the conclusion of the piece with the re-statement of the theme occurring in different voices at various points in the work.

Each voice moves forward, developing the theme in different ways. Although the voices are separate, the parts fit together within the larger framework of the piece, which move

ceaselessly until the final sound. It is interesting to hear, observe, and reflect in the dissertation, how the fugue-like manner in which the main themes initially stated by the students in the Song Writer's Club, were re-stated and further developed by them in collaboration with me at a later time. Two incidents come to mind which were analyzed in a fugue-like manner by the students: the incident with our death metal band, and the incident involving the "white girl behind the guitar" described in Chapters 5 and 6. In both cases, the themes were stated or voiced by various members of the Song Writer's Club, and then developed performatively after their initial statements. These developments took place through musical performances, recordings, discussions, interviews, and dialogues. Their analysis of the main themes in the Song Writer's Club emerged over time and opened up new questions and spaces of learning for these young people in collaboration with the teacher.

In terms of the teaching and learning process of the Song Writer's Club, I also used terminology from music composition drawn from my years of piano performance to describe the process of the running of the Club itself. For instance, Chapters 5 through 7 contain performative moments of tension or dissonance for the maestro as incidents in the Club occur which decenter my power and move it to a shared practice with the students. In music, a dissonance is a clash or tension resulting from the sound of two or more notes which do not harmonize. Similarly, there were dissonances between students of diverse musical cultures and genres. Some students liked country music. Others preferred heavy metal. And there were those who liked indie, pop, folk, classical, and even jazz. Although students made every effort to be polite to one another, I could at times feel those dissonances that I can only define as feelings of difference.

These dissonances produced opportunities for new musical ideas to emerge, in that "there is unity only when the resistances create a suspense that is resolved through cooperative interaction of the opposed energies (Dewey, 1934, p. 167). In the recording studio for example, the students could master and re-master their work/projects into something they wanted others to hear. More importantly, recording student work provided a space for these young people to share their work with one another, provide feedback to each other, and to encourage a re-writing process. As part of the digital, audio-recording process, students added harmonies to their own songs as well as to the songs of their peers, and embellished songs with various instrumental lines. The rich data set comprised of those observations and experiences in music education from multiple perspectives provided a full and rich palette of colors, which, when painted onto a canvas, realized the emergence of rich, diverse descriptions of experiences of working with young people in musical settings in the community.

Another compositional technique used to reinterpret the data as expressed by the young people in collaboration with myself is juxtaposition. I thought about the use of juxtaposition in one form of early 20th century modern music called *musique concrete*. This musical form could be heard in the works of Pierre Schaeffer or in the electroacoustic music of Edgar Varese. It is common today to associate the term with hip hop music whereby, "Cutting and pasting disparate sounds and music, the DJ forms intricate collages, fashioning new writing from a collection of past works" (Rice, J., 2002). The technique of juxtaposition places contrasting musical elements alongside one another as equal agents within the music. Applying the concept of juxtaposition to the dissertation research, the young people's perspectives of music education in and outside school contexts were interpreted in many different ways by the students. These contrasting musical ideas did not compete with one another but were equally voiced as much as possible, in

the collaborative analysis of the student and teacher. The rock show described in Chapters 5 and 6 was a juxtaposition of contrasting genres of music produced by these young people with my assistance.

Students often had difficulties analyzing and/or (re)interpreting their songs when asked to describe their meanings in interviews and dialogues. More than once, students told me, "Miss, my music *is* my voice." Therefore, when I interviewed the students I found it more effective to talk with the students about the process of making the music itself. Stories that related back to the music often surfaced in this way. That is to say, in the doing of the music-making process, the students had stories to tell which revealed much about their lives and opinions about the Club, music education, and school in general.

Within these stories lay deep insights into the lives of young people. Cole and Knowles (2001) discussed the role of lived experiences and stories in qualitative research. They spoke specifically of epiphanies as the center of meaningful stories: "unearthing epiphanic events of a life lived often become epiphanic research moments for one engaged in research analysis. In turn, they became the pivotal points around which the story of that life is told" (p. 120). The students often spoke of relationships that had failed for them. But in an epiphanic moment, they realize they miss that person, as was revealed in the musical performances of Violet and Margaret. When Violet and Margaret shared experiences from their lives in an artful fashion, they were revealing something very personal in their young lives to the audience. Artful analysis of performed life history was a window into the world of the young people engaged in the dissertation research and analysis.

It was impossible to separate the doing of musical performance from the analysis (Gouzouasis, 2006, 2008; Irwin et al., 2008). They were part of the very same recursive,

reflexive, critical, dialogic, performative process that aimed to create and share musical ideas between the students and the teacher. This sharing was vital to the students as a means of their communicating to others the sound and sight of a more youth-attuned music education as they expressed. When musical composition techniques were used to describe the music-making experiences of these young people in their own voices, a living analysis of the process was produced. This living analysis itself informed me in a musical way of the lived experiences of these students in school, and provokes me to work with them to improve practice.

Performing Artful, Ethical Processes

To date, no one has requested the withdrawal of a song, photo, or video. As quickly as Violet, Eoin, and I produced the videos, they were sent to each student and their parents/guardians by email for feedback and approval. Any changes and/or additions to the website were sent out to the students and their parents/guardians during the data collection period. In fact, changes in the website were sent to all participants and their parents/guardians as recently as June, 2014. We received mainly positive feedback during this process. One parent did make a comment to me in January, 2013 that some of the songs were "a little dark." I gave this some thought, and talked about it with the students. They received this comment with indignation! The students liked the songs the way they were. They felt these tunes depicted the real lives of teenagers. I must say, they did present a convincing argument! However, I did notice efforts on the part of some group members to write, record, and perform some more up-tempo numbers following this conversation. Our process of continuous feedback was effective in furthering dialogue in the group and informing all participants and their parent/guardians about the research process itself at every step in the process.

The issue of anonymity was clear-cut when it came to the musical performances. The students wanted *everyone* to hear and see them. The parents/guardians complied with the wishes of their daughters and sons by approving the submission of audio and video specimens produced by their daughters/sons, and interview specimens. One parent wrote directly on the consent form that the specimens gathered were to be used for scholarly purposes. I did keep this in mind during the data collection, and dialogued regularly with the students about how the data should be used. They were *all* in favor of using the recordings, videos, and interview data for change in music and education practices. The website and the dissertation were important steps in this change. Some students wanted more live interviews during and after performances posted directly on the website, which is something to consider in future.

When the students engaged in the interviews, it became clear to me they wished to keep our conversations between us. Most worthy of note perhaps was that I had to be corrected several times by the students in the use of their names. They wanted to be interviewed *in* their pseudonyms, which they chose themselves. Whenever I forgot to refer to them in their pseudonyms, I would receive a stern look, and reassured them their names would be changed for the textual part of the dissertation. Composing our research processes was shaped by the ethical guidelines of the university and school board such that the data in the hands of the students produced an ethical and artful interpretation of music education in the Sydney Academy Song Writer's Club. The following chapter describes the past and present context of the community in which the research took place. It examines the social-economic landscape of the Sydney industrial area in order to provide a more encompassing, rich description of the terrain of the school that these young people navigated on a daily basis.

Chapter 4: Sydney's Past and Present Youthful, Musical Reconstructions: Resistance and Reproduction

A crucial part of being a researcher and music teacher is to acquire an understanding of the musical needs of the young people in the context of the community in which they live. Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia's socio-economic landscape of the industrial area holds particular challenges for the community since the recent downturn of its primary industries. In the process of this investigation, I explored an articulation of economic inequalities and resistance to it. Resistance to social injustice has been reflected in the music of local young musicians in the community, which is described in this chapter. I make the case that the students who are embedded in the school and greater community context are producing musical resistances of their own to various social injustices, which are part of the renewal of the community (see Figure 8).

[Intro]

Verse 1:	We drown in vast pretention, we hate en mass prevention,
	We hate when church bells ring, but we don't do a thing,
	We complain about corporate art, and we all do our part,
	We starve half to death, some of us smoke crystal meth [break]
Chorus:	So what? It's not. Your life or death. So, give it a rest.
	It's just the way the world works. Sometimes it hurts.
	But it won't change. So what? [break]
Verse 2:	People speak selfless words, reel others in, in herds,
	Almost everyone I know does this,
	In exchange for the public's kiss,
	The odd honest one, who only strives for fun,
	At least that's what they say, I never listen anyway [break]
Chorus:	So what? It's not. Your life or death. So, give it a rest.

	It's just the way the world works. And sometimes it hurts.
	But it won't change. So what?
Bridge:	People lie, people die, people say, what they may,
	And I hate, having to wait,
	But I gotta do it anyway [breakdown]
Chorus:	So what? It's not. Your life or death. So, give it a rest.
	It's just the way the world works. And sometimes it hurts.
	But it won't change. So what?

Figure 8. Lyrics to a resistance song written by a student in the Club. The lyrics indicate the contradictions between what people often say and what they do. Points out the futility of young people to speak out for what is right when their voices are not being heard.

Industrial Sydney: A Working Past

Sydney Academy is nestled in the heart of Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada. Once a booming town with a thriving steel plant and subsidiary coalmines to feed its blast furnaces, the lives of people in Sydney centered largely on their work in this industry (Beaton, Lynch, & Steinhouse,1992). Until the late 1970s, there were no problems for young people in search of work to find jobs in the steel plant (Beaton et al., 1992; Caplan, 2005; Cook, 2010). Caplan (2005) described how some people had moved to Sydney in the latter half of the 19th century and into the early 20th century:

> Sydney is a boomtown. It has a boomtown shape, with industry established right through the heart of it. It still reflects the vulnerability and volatility of a one-industry town: an ethnic composition rooted in those first years, a conservative mercantile class, a history of outside control, and a focus outside the community for future development, with consequent paternalism and dependency-and PROMISE (p. 25).

The worldwide demand for steel marked a spot for Sydney as a competitor in Canadian and American industry. Beaton et al. (1992) discussed the upward surge in the population brought about by the manufacture of steel products in the Sydney steel plant. Thousands of migrant workers came to the area for steady work and good pay, and the population of Sydney grew from 2,427 people in 1891 to 17,723 people in 1911.

Caplan's work, *Views from the Steel Plant: Voices and Photographs from 100 Years of Making Steel in Cape Breton Island* (2005) is a collection of interviews with former steel workers and archived photographs depicting what life was like inside the plant. One of the interviewees, Frank Murphy, described the workers as family. There was a camaraderie that developed from working in dangerous conditions in areas inside the plant such as the blast furnaces.

Injustice

The camaraderie described by many steelworkers was not quite what it seemed (Caplan, 2005). Inside the steel plant, workers were not all treated equally. Immigrant workers were given work according to their ethnicity (Beaton et al., 1992; Caplan, 2005; Weeks, 2007). Beaton et al. (1992) explained how the ethnic origin was a determining factor of the job given to an individual in the steel plant: "In the skilled areas, immigrants could only be helpers. Most often, they were employed doing 'bull' work such as carrying or cleaning, or in the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs." Weeks (2007) stated that people from the West Indies who came to Sydney in search of work were met with very restricted opportunities:

> They were hired to work as laborers in the blast furnace or coke ovens, along with foreigners and lower status local whites. The blast furnace produced molten iron for the steel making process and was the hottest, dirtiest and most dangerous area of the plant" (p. 11).

In many ways, the work of Black Nova Scotians was unrecognized by the community. "In 1905 four blacks were killed when a high voltage cable fell across the metal building they were in. Although the *Halifax Evening Herald* made note of it, their names are not on the official company casualty list" (http://sydneysteelmuseum.com/histry/challenging _occupation_1.htmcox). Feeding the steel mill were the coal mines in nearby towns outside Sydney. Within these mining communities, the workers endured hardships to sustain the interests of business people outside of the community:

> And the company, from BESCO to DOSCO, did not love its workers. This was no paternalistic, community-based corporation dedicated to small profits and the well-being of the people it employed; this was a multinational corporation, headquartered in Montreal, profiteering during World War I and demanding their employees take pay cuts in the 1920's (http://www.umanitoba.ca/cm/cmarchive/vol11no6/companystory.html).

Resistance

The conditions for workers inside the Sydney steel plant were typical of those within primary industry in the Western world in the 1900s. They were resisted and made fully visible here in Cape Breton by the efforts of union radicals in the coal and steel industries (Frank & Manley, 1992; Mellor, 2012). A labor union worker from Scotland, J.B. McLaughlin, made it his mission to consolidate labor workers to fight for their rights for fair wages and treatment: "No other section of the working class was so exploited as the steelworkers of North America, who were forced to produce an output two or three times greater than that of English or German steelworkers for wages many times less" (Mellor, 2012, p. 181). In the story of the union movements in Cape Breton told by Mellor (2012), the growth of the labor union movement in Cape Breton coal mines and the steel plant was due largely to the life work of J.B. McLaughlin,

as “He had defied coal and steel companies, federal and provincial governments, and even his own international union headquarters in the never-ending struggle to uplift the coal miners and steelworkers of Nova Scotia” (p. 188).

Of course, resistance took many forms. Weeks (2007) articulated the resistance of West Indian workers to life in the plant by leaving it, in some cases, to find other ways to sustain their families in the community. This included movement “to open businesses or to practice their trades” (p. 11). Another kind of resistance emerged with the insertion of Christian missionaries into Sydney to improve health conditions for the people, as well as the well-being of the children. Education was a major focus of the Christian social reformers in Sydney and the surrounding region who employed the Christian religion as a means of improving the lives of immigrant children. Resistance to their efforts was located within the religious practices in immigrant families (Beaton, 1992; Beaton-Planetta, 1984). The region of Sydney known as Whitney Pier was commonly referred to as an ethnic ghetto due to the character brought to the area by immigrant families, which, according to Beaton-Planetta, included, “enclaves of Hungarians, West Indians and Canadian ‘Blacks,’ Chinese, Jews, Poles, Italians, Ukrainians, Lebanese, Croatians, and others” (p. 90). In the documentary film *Making Steel*, Beaton (1992) described how immigrant women were integral to the resistance to the missionary influences of their children in Sydney schools, through nurturing a home life which maintained their ethnic identity: “Religion blended spiritual devotion with family tradition and reinforced the values of each ethnic group that became part of a diverse community.”

The forms of resistance continue. Through song, the working conditions of the miners have been expressed by such voices as The Men of the Deeps (O’Donnell, 1985). The songs sung by these men have depicted the lives led by working class people in Europe and North

America as expressed by their choral director, John C. O'Donnell. Other musical resistances from the working past of Cape Breton are in the process of being documented and explored by researchers at Cape Breton University (http://www.beatoninstitutemusic.ca/index.html & http://disastersongs.ca/).

Social Change

After the closure of the steel plant in 2001, the loss of jobs exceeded 10,000 in the coal and steel industries (Donham, 2001), marking a period of social change in Cape Breton. The steel plant in Sydney which was once a symbol of a prosperous community in Eastern Canada during the early half of the 20th century, became a source of disease and affliction during the latter half: "The 100-year legacy of the coal mines, coke ovens and steel-making operations that kept Sydney's local economy alive for decades now leaves area residents concerned about their health, both present and future, physiological and psychosocial" (Haalboom, Elliott, Eyles, & Muggah, 2006, p. 228). The magnitude of illnesses, which grew from the steel industry, was largely attributed to the fact that the local community was in such close proximity to the Sydney tar ponds. Andrea Addario (2001) reiterates that this reservoir of pollution was declared "the worst toxic waste site in Canada" (p. 38) as in her review of *Frederick Street*:

> The horror of a toxic waste site situated in the middle of a community—of people living literally on top of it—is dramatically illustrated by stories of children playing in the tar ponds or on the contaminated barrens surrounding the plant (p. 38).

The unemployment rate in Cape Breton reported in the last census report was 15.9% (Statistics Canada, 2007) which was well above the national average of 6.3% (Akyeampong, 2007). In 2012, 26.5% of youth in Cape Breton were unemployed. This was 45.6% higher than the provincial rate of unemployment and 85.3% higher than the national rate (Kouzovnikov, A.,

Crowell, B., Smedley, C., & Clark, B). Cape Breton continued its pattern of out-migration of our young people, despite attempts to boost employment through the replacement of primary industry with call centers (Hudson, 2006). In his report to the Nova Scotia government, Levin (2011) mentioned the fact that schools in Nova Scotia continue to suffer the effects of declining enrolment and disengagement of the youth from learning and school life.

Sydney schools within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality are socially and ethnically diverse. Student populations are comprised of descendants of immigrants from Europe, the Mediterranean, the West Indies, and Asia who came from their countries of origin to work in the steel plant in the early 20th century (Beaton, 1992; Beaton-Planetta, 1984; Caplan, 2005; Mellor, 2010); international students in secondary (http://nsisp.ca/) and post-secondary institutions (Siddiq, Holterman, Nethercote, Sinclair, & White, 2009); students from the Mi'kmaq urban First Nation community of *Membertou* (Wright, 2010); Acadians (http://csap.ednet.ns.ca/nos_ecole.php#centrescolaire); and island Celtic groups (Ivakhiv, 2005). The 2006 census (Statistics Canada, 2007) indicated that out of 102,250 people in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, there were 4,670 people of Aboriginal identity, 1,730 newcomers, and 1,750 persons total who are members of a visible minority. The largest groups of visible minorities include 220 persons of Chinese descent, 260 persons of South Asian descent, 970 persons of Black descent, 105 persons of Latin American descent, and 85 persons of multiple visible minorities.

I remember one of my first days at Sydney Academy approximately ten years ago when two Black caseworkers called a meeting for all Afro-Canadian students during class time. They were disappointed when only a few students showed up for the meeting. When I asked them what happened, they told me that many of the Black students did not want to be identified.

According to these caseworkers, students of mixed origins for example, chose not to be identified as belonging to the Black community. The caseworkers were concerned that these young people would lose their sense of history and identity within the Black community and become estranged from its members. When I spoke to the students themselves, they did not seem concerned about losing their sense of self. On the contrary, they were more concerned about the pressure to create a sense of self which was acceptable to adults and others in the school community. Similarly, among the students participating in the dissertation research are students from the Mi'kmaq First Nations community and the Black community, who did not want to identify as belonging to these particular communities. They are similar to me in that they are of mixed origin and did not necessarily stand out in a visual sense as members of these particular communities.

Over the years, students from these communities have told me that they desired to be involved in those activities through which they could define themselves free from the labeling often prescribed to them by various members of the school and greater community. As I explained earlier, this was part of their individual experiences of difference within the school system (James, 2000). I thought about how students might develop personal expressions of self and other in the music program. I encouraged them to be themselves and to freely define themselves within my classroom as well as the Song Writer's Club. I hoped that their experience in the Song Writer's Club would not continue racism and the racialization of these youth as their legacy. Instead, we worked to open up the space to interrogate potentially racializing practices in the Club, school, and larger community.

Youthful, Musical Reconstructions of the School Program

Reflecting on my childhood memories of difference has helped me begin to understand

the feelings of alienation my students tell me about in their own lives. I remember how these feelings often lifted when I visited my Caribbean relatives:

Once every three years or so, we would leave school and all our friends for a number of weeks to visit our family in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Mum told us it was "God's country," I believed her because the weather felt like magic to me, we spent time with many relatives I rarely saw otherwise, and although I felt different from everyone else, I felt accepted. I was quite young during this particular excursion, but I distinctly remember not wanting to return home to Sydney . . . .

I remembered when I was a young person growing up in Sydney. I often felt estranged growing up with such a diverse family background! Who was I? With whom could I truly identify? For me, music was a comfort. It was an alternative world, and a place in which I could truly be myself and let my imagination soar. It provided a place where I felt my voice was heard. But since the downturn of our industry most recently in 2001, the insecurity of young people not knowing where their future lies has produced a new set of challenges. In order to change my approaches, I work to locate the music in the lives of the young people with whom I work, whom I teach, and who, at times, teach me. I continuously interrogate my practices to develop a wide range of skills to build a music program that will address the particular interests of the diverse young people attending Sydney Academy. Through dialogue with one another, with me, and with others in the school and greater community, young people have shaped my pedagogy and have taken an active role in the design of the music program over the past fourteen years. Earlier, many young people expressed their interest in musical production in our feeder junior high program which grew from just over 30 students to almost 200 students. Currently,

there are more and more students at Sydney Academy who are interested in developing careers in the music industry either through pursuing various post-secondary programs, or through a blend of performance, studio work, and private instruction. Others choose to continue their musical activities so as to enrich their lives. What has been made plain to me through this dissertation research is how these young people are deeply committed to music-making processes to express who they are, who they are becoming, and where they want to be in their lives in and out of school. These identities, experiences and expressions are grounded in both past and present social realities of their community.

Summary: Creating New Visions of Self and Community

The aim of this chapter was to provide a context for the reader for the socio-economic and political challenges faced by the people in the community of Sydney and to explore the impacts of these challenges upon young people in general. Understanding some aspects of history of social injustice and resistance of the people in the Sydney industrial region, as well as the demographics of the community could help the reader relate with some of the music created by the young people in the dissertation research. The music created by these students had often been described by them as their escape from the real world. Recognizing the challenges produced by the impact of the recession in Cape Breton on young people could help the readers gain an appreciation for how these students were using their music to remove themselves from hardship.

The urban context in which I am teaching music has a complexity, which is not often reflected in music teacher training programs (Schmidt, 2011). I asked myself if I could "envision music classrooms where music deals with performance, pedagogy, composition, instrumentation, and technology, but done in close and mindful relation to race, poverty,

violence, self-expression, and economic production?" (p. 5). The implementation of the recording studio in the music class was a vital part of this process aimed at creating a socially and culturally relevant pedagogy. Studio recording seemed to provide the ideal space in which student voices would be heard.

Thinking about the protest history of our community, I heard new protests coming from these young people during the dissertation research. Remembering the start of this chapter, the recording of "So What?" by Cyrus rendered me mindful of the forms of resistance youth in the school were building through music. I advise the reader to listen again to this track. After hearing some of the history of the industrial past of Sydney, what do you hear now? I heard in this track the will of young people to move past complaining about those things they could not change to attempt to do something concrete to improve life in the present. In Chapters 5, 6, and 7, I discuss what exactly the students were doing through their music-making to improve music education and school as revealed in their interviews and musicking processes. I also put these analyses and interpretations against those found in the international literature to examine similarities and differences encountered in this research.

Chapter 5: Engagement as Being "Into It"

After reviewing the international literature on school disengagement in concert with my observations and experiences teaching music in the public school system as described in Chapter 1, I sought to understand how engagement looks and sounds as defined by the students through their music-making. Student engagement within a public school context had been thoroughly researched in Canadian literature. For instance, the Canadian Education Association (CEA) published a series of research reports of their studies conducted within public schools which began with the formulation of initial ideas about student engagement in 2007 (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009). The definitions for student engagement emerging from the CEA described the multiple dimensions of this phenomenon which included social and academic engagement (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009), intellectual engagement (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009), and more recently, institutional engagement (Dunleavy, Milton, & Willms, 2012).

A great deal of emphasis had been placed on the development of intellectual engagement in this research which was defined by Friesen (2008): "An absorbing, creatively energizing focus requiring contemplation, interpretation, understanding, meaning-making and critique which results in a deep, personal commitment to explore and investigate an idea, issue, problem or question for a sustained period of time" (p. 9). I thought about the many manners in which students have described their experiences of engagement in music-making, and what they could add to the dialogue on engagement. As I observed the students participating in music making and read the literature on school engagement, my own definition of student engagement in public school settings emerged. This culminated in my coming to understand engagement as a deep involvement in and commitment to learning in its many facets embodied by young people in

spaces of belonging they created in collaboration with adult members of the school and larger community.

This chapter provides analyses of the responses and thoughts of the students engaged in the Song Writer's Club around research question number one: *How do students articulate their perceptions and experiences of engagement in music-making?* In this chapter, the students interpreted engagement in their interviews as informed by their music-making processes in the Song Writer's Club. This chapter reveals their many interpretations of engagement; adding to the research of school engagement in a highly creative manner. A main theme surrounding the *prettiness* of art emerged, and was developed through multiple-entry points in the discussion in a fugue-like manner, and led to a series of deeper, more critical insights surrounding barriers to student school engagement due to complexities of difference (James, 2000).

Reinterpreting Engagement as Putting Yourself Into the Music

> Alexis: When I get really into it, like it's . . . it's I don't even know how to describe it 'cause like music is just like so important to me. If we didn't have music, I don't know what I'd do with myself. I really don't. Like it's expression, and it's art. You can put your heart and soul into it. You listen to a song and it describes exactly how you feel. It can make you feel better. It can help you through hard days.

The day before the first set of interviews began, I posed a question to the students about how they might define their musical engagements in the after-school Club. "Engagement?" they asked. "What does that mean?" I tried to come up with a few words that I thought might make sense to the group. This spurred a conversation among them. However, I was met with shoulders shrugging, rolling eyes, short debates, and ultimately, "Can we get back to

songwriting?" I sat at my desk with my head in my hands, trying to figure out why they could not verbalize something we had been looking at, playing, performing, and discussing the entire semester. Where was I going wrong?

One of the students approached me at my desk and asked, "Miss, what's this whole 'engagement' thingy anyway?" I tried to re-explain what it meant to be engaged in the learning process, and added how we were applying it to music-making. "Oh!" she said. "You mean like, when you're into it?" I sat up straight and said, "That's it, MacKenzie! It's a description of what it's like for you to be into it." Looking pleased, MacKenzie went back to the rest of the group to translate the meaning of this word.

The notion of being "into it" was expressed by a number of the students as a certain feel. Getting to the essence of the meaning of this feel was difficult to extract. In their interviews, the students expressed a series of intangible explanations for their own musical feel:

Rick: Be hard to explain to someone that doesn't do it, 'cause it's kind like; kinda like being zoned out. Really, it feels like you're not really paying attention. Like you're thinking about other things, even when you're singing and playing. Completely different but it's like you can just think about other things and be in it and not make any mistakes.

Halia: When I'm really engaged in music, I think is when I couldn't [pause]. It's like when I can see it in my head. Like I can see performing it, I can imagine what it feels like, and I can imagine what it feels like for the crowd cheering and stuff. That's what I feel like—I'm really into it when I can imagine clearly in my head what it would feel like to sing with/to other people.

Some students were able to explain their feel for the music in more rational, technical terms. One student who had formal band training used technical terms such as rhythm, tempo, and parts, which referred to the sound of voiced, instrumental parts in the music.

Ernold: Personally, I would say it would be like feeling the music, I guess. Like feeling the beat to it, and um, the rhythm and tempo, and hearing all the parts come together in one, and just kind of hearing what it's supposed to sound like. I just kind of like how the band interprets the song, like how it kind of like changes it slightly.

Another student who had no formal band or choral training inside school, played in a number of bands outside of school. He also expressed his engagement in terms of technical understanding of the music, especially when engaged in the process of audio recording.

Joe: When I'm engaged in the music, I do everything technical; like when I'm practicing, like if a guitar is slightly out of tune, I won't care, or I just have to use, uh, an amp that's not that good, then I'll be OK with that. But when I'm recording, I try to get really technical, and I have to mix everything so it's perfect.

Miss L: Right, cool! OK. Um, can you give an example of that, that you can think of? When you had a really strong technical performance or recording or anything like that? Um [Noticing Joe was trying to think of a response], or it could be in a jam session. When there was like a full, engagement [in music-making]; like a really specific example?

Joe: Well, when I'm recording—I recorded six songs by myself—and I've mixed them over the last few months, until they're uh, they're pretty much the way I

wanted them. And I have them basically finished now. I just have one more song to finish.

Miss L: To finish your CD?

Joe: Yeah.

As was stated at the outset of this chapter, the research in school engagement by the CEA focused upon the intellectual dimension of learning engagement, which according to Dunleavy and Milton, et al. (2012) was "a serious emotional and cognitive investment in learning" (p. 2). In the interviews above, the students expressed elements of each of these facets of intellectual engagement. Feeling the beat, understanding how the music is supposed to sound while developing a piece of music for performance, imagining "clearly in my head" how the music would feel like to others. As the students articulated, these dimensions of being into the music were not separate one from the other. They often blurred the boundaries between the emotional and cognitive aspects of engagement.

Bowman (2004) argued that music education has not substantially integrated the role of the body in music-making into the Western music education paradigm. Bowman placed the body central to the integration of the various dimensions of the human person into the practice of music teaching and learning:

> When we hear a musical performance, we do not just 'think', nor do we just 'hear': we participate with our whole bodies; we construct and enact it. We feel melodies in our muscles as much as we process them in our brains—or perhaps more accurately, our brains process them as melodies only to the extent our bodily extended schemata render that possible (p. 47).

I heard elements of an understanding of the integrated and holistic aspect of music-making in the students' ideas about what it meant for them to be engaged or into the reading, writing, performing, and recording of music. I heard from these young people the thoughtfulness of rational understanding, the emotive aspect of interpreting and creating songs in genres of their choices, and the embodiment of music as part of the same process.

In these interviews with the students, I heard descriptions of music-making in ways that could contribute to new articulations of engaged learning of young people in high schools. The research reported by Dunleavy, Willms, Milton, and Friesen (2012), Dunleavy and Milton et al. (2012), and Willms and Friesen (2012) in the series *What did you do in school today?*, focused upon research conducted in math and language arts courses. However, there was little to no mention of the arts. Through their involvement in the Song Writer's Club, the students described the possibilities for art-based trajectories of youth learning engagements in secondary schools. Voiced by the students themselves in sound and sight, these youthful, holistic, artful engagements could deepen our knowledge of engaged learning.

The Abundant Renditions of Being Into It

The concept of flow, as developed by psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1990), has been used in educational theory to express learning engagement (Dunleavy, Milton, et al., 2012; Willms & Friesen, 2012). Csikszentmihalyi (1990) describes flow as autotelic. This term, which he borrowed from the Greek, refers to an experience in which "the person is paying attention to the activity for its own sake" (p. 67). When experiencing flow, an individual enters a deep state of concentration, and focuses upon the activity that they find to be affecting their life in a positive manner:

> The autotelic experience, or flow, lifts the course of life to a different level. Alienation gives way to involvement, enjoyment replaces boredom, helplessness turns into a feeling of control, and psychic energy works to reinforce the sense of self, instead of being lost in the service of external goals (p. 69).

It naturally ensued that forms of engagements varied from person to person, and that each of these young people would have their own ways of articulating their inner experiences of being into the music. In fact, one student, Mary Ruth, revealed to me that whenever she heard music, she engaged with it. Mary Ruth went as far as to correct me in the framing of one of my questions during the interview:

> Miss L: You're saying you're always into it. How do you know? How do you separate that from some other time when say you're *not* into the music? How do you know when you're just listening to it?
>
> Mary Ruth: Personally, I can't speak for others, but personally I'm never "just listening to it." I'm always feeling it. Like deep inside I'm feeling every single lyric; every single note and chord. And it just becomes a part of you. Part of me.

This student managed to clarify for me the role of listening in her engagement in music that was vital to her music-making processes. Another student had a similar idea about engagement in music and music-making through listening:

> Miss L: Can you give an example of a story when you were really into the music?
>
> Jake: Um, would listening to something count for that as well?
>
> Miss L: Oh, absolutely.
>
> Jake: I remember there was one time when I ended up not being able to sleep, and it was around 3:45 in the morning, and I was listening to this fifteen and one half

minute long rendition of the old blues song, "See That My Grave is Kept Clean," but it was done by an avant garde guitarist from Japan named Keiji Haino. It ended up making me space out for about, well the whole thing. I was actually working on schoolwork at the time so I ended up having to stay up until 4:30 in the morning to finish it [We both laugh]. But um, it was kind of a powerful experience.

In these two interviews, the students pointed to their listening to music as a key part of some aspect of their daily lives. For Mary Ruth, music became a part of herself through listening. Jake indicated that music helped him detach from his surroundings, which played a role in his completing his schoolwork. The research of Herbert (2011a, 2011b) suggested music listening in everyday life is part of maintaining "daily psychological balance" (Herbert, 2011a, p. 306). I had already observed how the students had adopted a holistic approach to describing their engagements in music-making. In these two examples, the students indicated how they used their engagements in music listening to reach into and enhance various aspects of their lives.

Irlen and Bartholomew voiced their experiences of being into the music in part by the response of the audience who listened to and watched their work:

Irlen: Like you feel it. You feel when you're engaged in music, like, it's a mode. Basically like, sometimes you'll just have all these great ideas for writing, or you'll put on a great show because you're in; like you're engaged in music.

Bartholomew: OK, well, I had a lot of gigs, but one rather interesting one I had—I don't know if the anecdote part of this really related to the question. But I had a gig, um, for not Run for the Cure, but one of the other related relays. So, it was four

in the morning, I believe. So I woke up rather early for this four in the morning gig, and I was sick. Had to do the gig anyway. So, obviously, I didn't expect this to be too great. Um, because I'm sick and it's so early in the morning my voice should be a very small fraction of its normal ability. But later on, talking to people, now these are relatives, but they're honest relatives. Apparently that was the best gig I've ever done for vocals, which struck me as very odd. I dunno, um, that was a very interesting experience, but I don't think despite the positive outcome; I don't think I would like to do a gig at four in the morning ever again [I am laughing at this point, as is Bartholomew].

Miss L: So do you think, Bartholomew, that you are measuring your engagement by others' response to you? Is it a part of it maybe?

Bartholomew: [Quickly] Yeah, somewhat. 'Cause I mean, somewhat. But d'y'know what? Not necessarily because I could play a song at a show, and it really bombs, and people tell me that, and I do consider that engagement. Just the sort of engagement where you will come to the agreement with the audience that you will never speak of that again [I laugh]. But um, it is still engagement. It's just the sort of engagement that you learn from, say.

Miss L: OK. So is the audience part of it do you think? Because obviously you like to perform. You're a performer, right?

Bartholomew: Yeah.

Miss L: Or is it more of an internal satisfaction? Or are they both part of that internal satisfaction? Or how does that work for you [I did not want to seem as though I was leading. However, I am curious to know based on the rich performance

experiences of Bartholomew, the role of the audience response in his musical engagement]?

Bartholomew: Uh, I guess. Yeah, there is both. Maybe they are [both] part of the internal satisfaction because like I say, I play at home so much it's sort of um, mindless recreation at this point. I've gotta practice of course, but I feel like I'm achieving something when people listen to it, and usually when they like it, which is a little contradictory, but, yeah. I do, um. I guess it's just something satisfying knowing what I'm doing is good in some way, and I mean you can't really trust your own judgment. You're either too hard on yourself or too easy, I find. So it's kind of nice when somebody else gives you the OK.

Bartholomew and Irlen both spoke of their musical engagements using the language of performance ethnography through which the performer discovers insights into her/himself through interactions with others in staged, cultural re-enactments (Jones, 2005). Jones described performance ethnography as an interactive activity, saying that "performance ethnography seeks to implicate researchers and audiences by creating an experience that brings together theory and praxis in complicated, contradictory, and meaningful ways" (p. 770). In the interview with Bartholomew, I could hear a communication occurring between himself and his audience that had an impact upon his overall performance and how he felt about it. Similarly, Irlen expressed his feelings of engagement in reference to the response of his audience to his performance.

I was somewhat concerned about certain other young participants who did not seem interested in the response of others at all, and delivered what seemed to be narcissistic definitions of engagement. One particular conversation about the musical engagement of a student dealt with the set-up of equipment and instruments before a show, and revealed his disconnection from

the group. Marth spoke about his experiences with music-making and musical performance in separation of others:

> Marth: I prefer to be, to do it all myself, because the less people there are, like when it's a smaller set-up it's fine to have multiple people, but like with a set-up like this, the only reason you would want other people is to lift things or move things, 'cause there's a lot of it and you want it done fast. But when it comes to connecting it, it really should be done by one person, and that's the person who's going to be running it, because having multiple people messing with it just clearly leads to chaos and can screw up a show. And has in the past. There's also, like moments when, uh, people who think they know it don't actually know it. That's the real annoyance.

I was troubled about what I perceived as Marth's isolation from others in the group. Thinking about performance ethnography as "an inventory of both self and other" (Jones, 2005, p. 770), I thought about ways we might break some of the monologic barriers of school music to open up our music-making as a shared practice. Part of this process was in encouraging approaches with the students which respected the many forms of musical engagement that exist in the world and among their peers in the Song Writer's Club.

As the interviews continued to unfold, many of the students revealed their appreciation for the different ways their peers made music. In these instances, the students opened their minds to new musical ideas and opinions as they expressed to me. I continuously questioned my own assumptions about music-making and music education while encouraging the students to do the same:

> Effy: My engagement in music-making is bipolar if you will. Because I go from genre

to genre like people change their shirts [Effy and I laugh]. I've played with everyone in the school. I've played for almost everyone, and I've learned a bunch of different stuff from everyone in the Club and it's been a phenomenal experience. Phenomenal!

Miss L: Oh my God. You *are* the poster boy [Effy nods enthusiastically].You really are! So how has participation in the Club affected your engagement in music-making?

Effy: Well like I said, learning from all the different genres has given me a new perspective on culture and music around the community, and it's just I have a mad respect for everyone in the Club. Everyone's genres are phenomenal. They're good at what they do. And they've learned from each other. We've all learned from. We've all learned from each other so we all have our individual sounds. No one sounds the same in the Club. Nobody.

Gertrude: Um, I would say it's [engagement in music-making] quite a bit different from previous years in which there was a lot less of a structure, which was actually a lot of fun. Didn't think I was gonna like it, but after you got used to it, it becomes a lot more fun. It was a lot more fun than I thought it was gonna be 'cause we were able to really write our own pieces and everything really transcended rather than "this stayed in the Club," and "this stayed in music class," and "this stayed in band class." It all kind of mingled together. And that was fun.

Ernold: Well, first of all, playing by yourself is just like you can't really get other opinions. You can't really get other sounds. It's just what you have. Uh, whereas when you're with more people, even just two or three more people, there's more of a diversity. So there's more like, um, there's more I guess opinions.

Miss L: Diversity is a good word. Yeah.

Ernold: Yeah, there's more different sounds coming together as one.

Understanding and appreciating their own music-making processes and practices as well as those of others was paramount to developing spaces of belonging in which the students could critique culture performatively and analyze institutional frameworks in need of change for a more engaging school experience for young people. Within the Song Writer's Club, new musical cultures began to emerge from the performed dialogue among musicians of different musical backgrounds.

Mapping the Terrain Through Youthful, Musical Performance Processes

Believing as I did that music was inherently social and cultural (Small, 1998), I kept an ever open ear and watchful eye for those moments when new music would spring forth from the musical fusion occurring when multi-genre musicians encountered difference. The diversity of musical backgrounds within the Club made it necessary to find a means of working alongside one another while respecting differences. To navigate through such a thorny (but crucial) terrain in the education of youth, I utilized some of the theoretical ideas of performance ethnography from Conquergood (1985), and Fabian (1990).

Conquergood (1985) developed a method of working together with diverse groups in theater performances. In particular, Conquergood talks of a method of placing in conversation, different worldviews:

> The aim of dialogical performance is to bring self and other together so that they can question, debate, and challenge one another. It is a kind of performance that resists conclusions, it is intensely committed to keeping the dialogue between performer and text ongoing (p. 9).

I had the difficult task as the teacher-researcher-practitioner, of trying to develop a performing, after-school club, in a sea of difference. I tried my best to model values that embraced difference and strove to keep an open mind towards diverse musical cultures and the values they espoused. I placed the notion of dialogic performance in conversation with Fabian's (1990) idea of "performative ethnography—the kind where the ethnographer does not call the tune but plays along—would be the approach that fits situations where our societies no longer exercise direct control" (p. 19).

Having laid aside the curriculum to develop new approaches and processes to music education in the after-school club, the interpretation of the teaching and learning of music is in the hands of the students and guided by myself. Fitting together both these concepts from theater arts meant I relinquished control as the teacher to clear space for the young people to shape and craft their music to their liking. Their aim was to create music and perform it in ways that spoke to them and their peers. My role was clearly supportive. I became more open to the emergence of new musical texts constructed, re-constructed, and co-constructed by the students amongst themselves, and with me. I heard and saw these co-constructions in process during preparations for public performances, in studio, and again in their conversations, as students talked about their work, which they constantly re-shaped and re-fashioned. (An overview of the musical performance processes of the Club produced by the students can be viewed on the Club website by clicking on the CD cover on the home page.)

Self-other characteristics of youthful, musical engagements. Being into the music occurred in two main contexts depicted by the Club members: (a) in social or group contexts, and (b) individually. Although the literature on engagement included a discussion of flow and of social engagement, it did not explicitly make a distinction between these two types of

engagements as described by the students (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009; Dunleavy, Milton, et al., 2012; Dunleavy, Willms, et al., 2012; Willms & Friesen, 2012):

Miss L: What does it mean to be engaged in music-making?

Dave: Well I think that you have to be playing obviously [slightly laughing], so whenever I'm like with a group, like sometimes besides my band, I jam with Bartholomew and you know Ned, Wilma. You know, pretty much everyone I could, like in the music Club. So if I do something with them, I feel like I'm engaged. So as long as you're with people, I find. Like with a group, and you're all together, you're having fun. That's how I'm engaged I find.

Similarly, another student attributed his feeling into it when working as a member of a group:

Effy: Um, it's just like me and the group. We have an idea, we know it sounds good and we know; we just know we struck gold. And we can feel it. Just like, "This song is going to be something." And we record it and we hear it. We're like, "We made this." And it feels great.

Some students defined their musical engagements within both categories. Individual and group engagements each served its own purpose in their musical lives:

Miss L: And what about like, playing on your own versus playing in a group? What role does all of that play in how you feel about being engaged in music-making [I have adopted the term "feel" from the students as the interviews proceeded]?

Lightening: Well when you're playing by yourself, like to be more or less engaged with your own music, like by yourself, you have to more or less learn it. Like if you're learning a song, you have to know the chords if you're playing a guitar, or you have to know the lyrics if you're gonna sing, or know the notes and stuff. And it's

more or less you have to know the whole song yourself, and you gotta get into it when you're sing'in it. But if you're in like a band, you kinda work together to figure out who's going to do this part when and what time, and when someone's gonna break, and it's kind of like, getting into the song even deeper into it knowing when you should stop and when it's going to crescendo, and when it's like, just, kind of with your friends and stuff.

Miss L: So it's a different kind of engagement?

Lightening: Yeah.

Miss L: And which do you prefer do you think?

Lightening: Um, I couldn't actually, I couldn't pick one over the other. I guess it's more or less what my mood would be like. Like, if I'm in the mood to work with people and like um, kind of like discuss different parts of different songs and stuff, then it's fun to be engaged with it, when it's like a group of friends. But if I'm in like a mood to just sit down and like learn my own songs and stuff, it's funner to be by myself.

MacKenzie makes a similar distinction between individual and group engagements in the context of writing a song:

MacKenzie: Well when I was writing [her own song], and like at first it was just really random, and Lightening's all like, "Hey, you guys have songs." And I'm like, "Well I don't have a song, but we could totally work together."

Miss L: Uh hum.

MacKenzie: And then it just kinda like started from there, and then it was just like every day, just working on it and like writing lyrics. Thinking the lyrics and just kind of

> putting it together, and then every Wednesday, coming back in and like, "Lightening, this is what I have. Help me make it perfect." And then we did all that, and then she helped me. Like both of us did all of like the musical part and everything. Like putting into it, and it's like I thought this part, and then she's like, "Well that sounds good. It would be good if we had this."

The group engagements lent themselves well to a kind of intermingling which marked a divergence from the model of music-making based in solitary practice characterizing the western art model of music education described by Gaztambide-Fernández (2010). In *Wherefore the Musicians?,* Gaztambide-Fernández assertes that we need to think through the process of how music was made in order to develop socially just practices. He articulates how problems surrounding Western music education practices are due in part to the emphasis placed on the musical genius. Using approaches elevating the musical genius, reinforced class distinctions that enabled students of more privileged backgrounds to participate fully in school music programs. By contrast, those students who for various reasons might not have had access to the same formal music training in schools would continue to be shut out of music education programs. Although I did not specifically measure the engagement of students who did not have formal musical training in school, there were a number of students, such as Andrew, who found the space to create music with their peers in school for the first time when they joined the Song Writer's Club. For Andrew, jam sessions in the Club led to performances with his group and eventually to recordings.

Re-engaging an Ethical Project

As I listened to the students during the interviews, I thought about whether or not we were still reproducing imbalances and inequalities through our own music-making practices in

the Club. I also wondered how the students and I could collaboratively determine when injustices were occurring. How could we create more inclusive practices with so many different musical perspectives? I continued to work with the students to keep an open dialogue throughout the period of data collection about all matters pertaining to the enhancing of music-making processes and practices, and reminded them often to try and remain open to new sounds. This speaks to the need to re-enact the ethics of this kind of research as it unfolds.

The Song Writer's Club decided to host a rock show at the school in the Spring of 2013 to represent musical styles, which, according to the students, were not often heard in school. Bands from outside the Club expressed their interest in performing in the show. It was decided, therefore, that the Club would host a series of auditions to select a few bands from outside the group. There was so much interest that we needed to meet as a group to hear the various bands and individuals over a series of lunch hours and two after-school periods. These informal auditions seemed to be going quite smoothly. I heard the students often stating such positive statements as "You rock! See you at the show." At other times, there were words of encouragement followed by "with a bit more practice, you'll be able to play at the next one." I was quite content with their progress. If it had been earlier in the year, the students would, perhaps, have injured some of their peers with their words.

On the first Wednesday after-school screening, a group walked in. Comprised of students from our high school and another nearby high school, these students were seriously into it. The music began. I backed away from the group and plugged both my ears with my eyes wide open. Just waiting for it to finish, I could hardly believe what I had heard. The music was so loud. And the lead was growling, as the Club members later told me. I have to admit, I was

glad I could not understand the words, although the group later reassured me there were no curses in the lyrics.

They finished their song to screams and applause from the group. I was quite mortified. They called it, "Celtic death metal." How could we represent this kind of music at a rock show attended by parents and smaller children? In fact, a member of the Club made this very point. Formally trained, from a privileged family, this Club member felt strongly that the music was inappropriate and unsuitable for the public. "After all," she said, "aren't we supposed to be showing the best of the music from the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board? What about people who bring younger brothers and sisters and elderly people?" A heated discussion was spurred in various groups within the Club. Our time ran out that afternoon, and I thought, "I guess we'll have to decide this later."

I passed the following week with the somewhat nagging feeling that we were going to have to resolve these differences; realizing it was not going to be easy. When we met on the last Wednesday to hear the last of the groups I asked the Club, "What are we going to do about the Celtic death metal group?" The student who had been adamantly opposed to the group performing was away that afternoon. All eyes were on me. No one said a word. "What do you think?" I asked. While trying to discuss the matter with the group, I got the sense that about half the group wanted the band to perform. The other half were uncertain with some members in deep discussion and others with looks of contemplation on their faces. I was not sure what to think or say. I said thoughtfully, "Are we going to get support for what we're doing if we display this kind of music? Is it a bit too controversial right now?"

I instantly wished I had not said this. I was met with downright anger from some members of the group. The maestro had returned in full force at that moment. I tried to explain

to the students that they had to be mindful of their audience's musical tastes. Maybe the death metal band needed to stop screaming if they wanted to be taken seriously? Perhaps my opposition on that day provided the students with needed ammunition to fight their case. One student, MacKenzie Applebottoms, stormed out of the room. Halia called out in an angry tone of voice, "Why does art always have to be pretty? Why can't it be ugly sometimes? Life isn't always pretty, and neither is art!" I froze on the spot, remembering the words of Conquergood (1985):

> In their fieldwork efforts to grasp the native's point of view, to understand the human complexities displayed in even the most humble folk performance, ethnographers try to surrender themselves to the centripetal pulls of culture, to get close to the face of humanity where life is not always pretty (p. 2).

Was it possible that the students from the Club were already deeply engaged in this project from a moral standpoint? Did they want to represent those aspects of life that are not so pretty? Why? The pure emotion of this student response seemed to have been contagious that day. My expression changed, and I heard myself say, "Well, if you feel that strongly about this group, then maybe they should perform." After stating this, many of the faces of the students expressed relief; as if I finally understood something they had been trying to tell me for quite some time.

When it came time to vote, every hand in the class went up to show support for the Celtic death metal band. In the case of the student who had been adamantly against their performing, something no doubt transpired between her and the other members of the Club. When I spoke with her a couple of days later to ask her what she thought of the band performing in the show, she nodded her head vigorously and said, "Great!" Problem solved. The night of the show arrived. The band entered the stage and their performance was truly unforgettable. Face paint,

light show, growls, and complex guitar riffs. I found myself on my feet screaming not only with the students, but with their parents and, in some cases, grandparents.

The metal band added a 30 second hook about anti-bullying. Their lyrics included screaming the words, "Bullying is bad" at the top of their lungs to running scales on the guitar and bass, accompanied by machine gun drum lines. "Bullying is bad," screams the death metal band. How very paradoxical. All of a sudden the research work seemed to take a turn. The students who had engaged in the music-making processes and practices of the Song Writer's Club had now also engaged in an ethical project as revealed by their support of the musical performance of this group. The screaming and outward appearance of violence and aggression could sometimes be a façade for what lie within. Within these young people lies care, compassion, and concern for others. As institutional ethnography aims to uncover power as implicit in reproducing structures of inequality (Smith, 1987, 2002, 2006a, 2006b), the students were deeply reflecting on and offering critique of adult-centered practices in music education, most specifically that *pretty music and what it represents are really not pretty at all*. They arrived at this insight through developing an appreciation and understanding for the different musical expressions emerging from the group, and particularly for seeing an injustice in the fact that the music of some people was not adequately represented in school.

Making "Miss" Understand the True Prettiness of Youth Music-making

The words of Halia became a theme that was developed in the Club through our fugue-like manner of analysis (see Figure 9). The conversation around what had been learned from the Club and through this incident in particular continued into the end of term interviews:

Miss L: So looking back at the whole year MacKenzie, how would you define and describe your engagement in music-making?

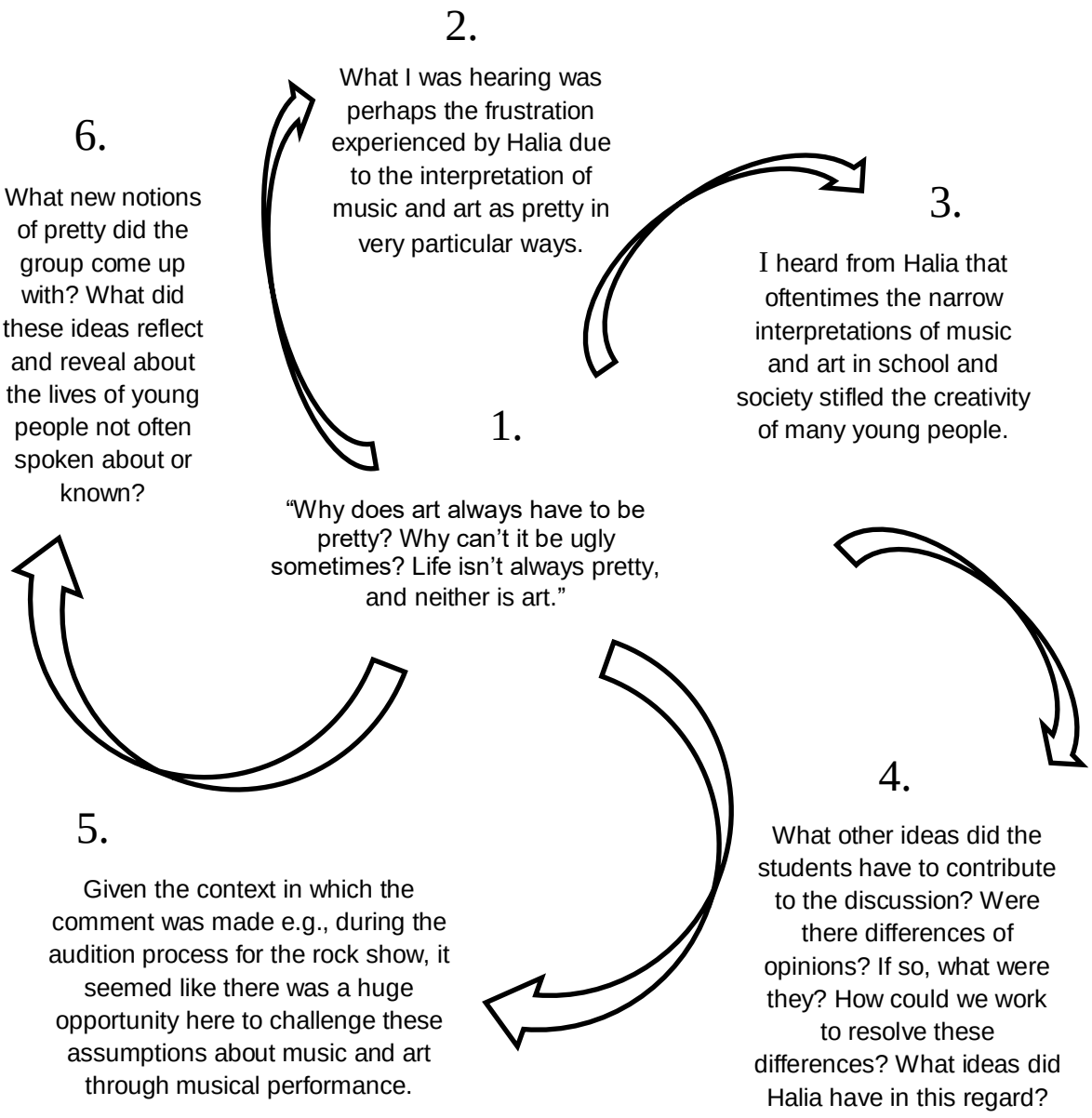

Figure 9. Diagram displaying how to develop a fugal analysis based upon student opinions. Meaningful statements are listened to attentively, discussed with the group, and analyzed by group members. Students enter the conversation at various points and develop the main idea or theme in different ways. The main idea is whether or not art always has to be pretty.

MacKenzie: [Laughing]. Um, I dunno. Like, I feel when I talk to like Lightening or any of my other collaborators, like I have this idea. They have this idea. I may not like her idea. She might not like mine, but then we find something right in the middle. And it's like "I love it." It's perfect, and it just reaches into your soul and grabs it. Like your soul can connect with the song.

Miss L: This is killer! How has participation in the Club affected your engagement in music-making?

MacKenzie: Well I feel like after the entire semester of like talking with everybody and like getting to know other genres, 'cause I really opened up to the whole everything.

Miss L: Me too! [We both laugh, remembering the day MacKenzie stormed out of the room.] But that was a major eye opener for me, though. Because I had no idea that everybody listened to this music. I just thought it was like, a very small group of students, you know, trying to be noisier than everybody else or something. I mean I didn't know. That there's a huge culture around it.

MacKenzie: Oh God, yes. That type of music is so popular.

Miss L: You should have stayed because at the end I said, "Guys, how many of you listen to this?" Every hand went up.

MacKenzie: I used to, but then last year I just, some of the songs, like I listened to the acoustic versions, so I know the lyrics. But then when I listen to them when they're actually screaming the song "Don't go" by Bring Me the Horizon, oh my gosh. Like you wanna cry. You can hear the emotion in his voice. And that's why it's such a powerful genre.

Miss L: It's like a religion to you guys.

MacKenzie: Yeah.

Miss L: Like it's got a sacredness? Because it's coming from a real place where people are baring their emotions? Doesn't always have to be pretty?

MacKenzie: That's not really the point. The prettiness of it *is* the emotion.

Miss L: Right [pause].

MacKenzie: Music these days isn't even pretty—the words. It's the emotions. That's what you need to have a beautiful song.

The song of which MacKenzie spoke told the story of a young boy who had been murdered in Yorkshire by three of his friends. Oliver Sykes, the artist who wrote the song, had come from the same town as the victim and is singing about the incident. I was deeply troubled by this interview, and concerned about the sounds produced in their songs which often depicted a sense of helplessness felt by young people living in a world dominated by adults who do not seem to understand them (see Figure 10).

[Intro]

Verse:	Never was and never will be what you want, and it's gonna kill me,
	I fought too hard for far too long,
	The least you could do is tell me what I did wrong
	Now the pressure started, goes from my head to my heart,
	I took one too many steps toward the edge.
Chorus:	Tonight I think I'm go'in off the deep end,
	All I see is torture around the bend,
	Tonight I think I'm go'in off the deep end,
	The wound you left on my heart will never mend [interlude]
Bridge:	I wish the tears had come at night, wash away in all of the pain,

But they just dry a well, and the ocean swells with acid rain,

Told me it was all my fault, I took the blame, I faced the pain

But tonight I'm clearing my name,

Chorus: Tonight I think I'm go'in off the deep end,

All I see is torture around the bend,

Tonight I think I'm go'in off the deep end,

The wound you left on my heart will never mend

[Outro]

Figure 10. Lyrics to a song written by a band participating in the Club depicting a theme of self-harm. An example of how students interpreted pressures experienced by youth such as themselves, in an artistic fashion.

During the year of data collection, there had been documented cases of violence between young people, resulting in the death of a young girl in Nova Scotia. The song "Deep End" written by Atlantic was written and recorded close to the same time of the death of this teen girl, and depicted the pressures the students felt to conform in society according to members of the band. What were these young people trying to tell us about their world? Piecing together the parts of this puzzle in a fugue like fashion involved engaging the students in critical, reflexive, dialogic, performative processes about some of the music of the students: the sensitive lyrics full of emotion, the aggressive music expressing anger and futility as in the works of groups such as The Ocelots, and music which sounds pretty to many people, but is anything but pretty. I drew a conclusion as to what some of the students were saying through their music: What do we do when adults and others cannot hear us, understand who we are, what we are all about, and the world we live in? We escape into our musical worlds.

I needed to step away from my own assumptions about what is acceptable music, and what is not acceptable. This no doubt was linked to my privileged background and upbringing, and the impressions I had formed around what constituted proper music. In this incident, a major

dislocation of myself occurred, which left me questioning my own musical background, and leaving me open to receiving new musical knowledge and ideas from the students.

Intermingling of musical tastes among the students which had taken place in the Club through music-making had rendered these young people sensitive to one another while communicating powerful messages to the public about the world in which they live. Their deeply committed engagement in the project at this point was unstoppable. I could not help but wonder if maybe we should not all receive a short blast of some of the edgier music produced by young people from time to time. Their music was a reminder of our responsibilities in education and society to listen to young people, and work with them to create a better world in whatever school/community context we find ourselves.

Re-constructing Community by Understanding Young Musical Lives

While at times there seemed to be an understanding amongst the performers in the Club as to what form music should take, what constituted a good song, or an acceptable performance, more and more differences surfaced at every point. These differences became themes, which produced new challenges and opportunities for learning. In the live video recorded by the group Buttermilk Pancakes, one of the members of the group experienced musical performance for the very first time in front of an audience. As a result of his nerves, the group sped up at different points during their performance. The sensitivity of the group toward this member allowed them to keep going in the song while trying to cover for him. The group told me about the performance the next day. I was not aware of the fact that one of their group had never engaged in public musical performance before. I was pleased at how they worked things out between them and assisted this new group member to perform with them. He expressed to me that

although frightened on the stage, he was thrilled by the opportunity to perform with a band for the first time.

During the interviews, a number of the students revealed personal, biographical information that gave more depth to the analysis of school engagement. Probing the data with an understanding of these young lives led to a greater depth of understanding youthful, musical school engagement through the lens of life history (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Tilleczek, 2014). Tilleczek (2014) proposed that a closer look at the biographies of young people through a variety of creative media could illuminate our understanding of young lives and open up avenues of conversation with young people in various institutional contexts: "In attending to the biography and being of youth, we form a window of understanding young lives as stories that portray complex, fluid and flexible characters over time and place" (p. 10).

Looking at the performed data, and fitting it with the student interviews of a biographical nature, added another layer of analysis to the data. The students often spoke to me of experiences of disengagement from school music programs. Illuminating aspects of their young lives to me in their interviews helped me assist in their re-engagement in the Song Writer's Club. Some of the students told me of their experiences of engaged music-making in reference to family:

> Halia: Um, when my brother used to like when I was really little, and he used to play with [a certain local band] that was like probably the biggest thing, 'cause I was like so young when he played with them, and I just thought that they were so awesome, and they had crazy beards and like they played guitars [I laugh slightly, as does Halia], and I think that shaped my whole life probably. And I was like

what I'd like to do. Whether they were the same kind of people or he shaped me, I dunno.

Another student described a lived experience in reference to her family that shaped her future musical engagements as described by her:

Mary Ruth: The first time I ever performed I was five years old. Um, the boardwalk, they used to have talent shows? And I wanted to perform, and I called up and my Mom got me signed up to perform, but the day of my Mom said, "I don't think you should do this. You're too young. What if you get nervous or whatever?" And I actually cried and I begged my mother to let me perform. And borderline went on my knees. And my father came home and he was like "If she's that, not upset but excited about it or into it, you should let her do it." And my Mom said OK. And we got ready and I went, and that was the first time I performed, and I never looked back. I've been performing ever since.

Another student spoke about her music in reference to her family in a very different way:

Panda: Well, [I'm] saying about relationships that have gone wrong in the past, and I sing about like, you know, um, death in the family, stuff like that. And relationships that have gone semi-good. Stuff like that. It's stuff usually, uh, people that sing country music usually sing about.

Miss L: Ok. So like, things in your personal life?

Panda: Um hm.

Miss L: And so these things you like to sing about, can you give an example when you can think of a time when you felt like you were really into the music? And people around you were really listening?

Panda: Um, I'm writing a song about my old, yeah, my older sister who passed on when my Mum was seven months pregnant with me. And I feel like I'm really getting into it with that.

For all the students above, their immediate families had a major part in their musical growth and development, as articulated by themselves in their definitions of musical engagement. How might they move beyond these stories to develop new connections in school which might further their musical growth? As the teacher and researcher in the Song Writer's Club, this meant at times developing the kind of trusting relations one saw in families, which helped students to freely express themselves.

To understand what some of the stories meant in terms of the research on student engagement in public school contexts, I incorporated two main theoretical constructs in the research processes. The biographical model and "complex cultural nests" from youth studies (Tilleczek, 2011, p.4), and the institutional ethnographic model of Smith (1987, 2002, 2006a, 2006b) came together to form fluid, moving description of those ruling relations acting on young lives within a shifting global landscape such as existed in Cape Breton during the research period. Understanding young lives as revealed in conversations around their music-making processes assisted in creating a better map of the ruling relations on the social terrain of these youth. This map indicated how the students reproduced and resisted those pressures, or musical ruling relations which impacted their musical interests, preferences, engagements, and lives overall. Mapping the social terrain of their musical lives could help us understand more fully how to assist in their civic engagement by hearing about and making more audible, the complexities surrounding their own lived experiences of music-making. The audio tracks, images, and video data on the website provided a rich and creative map by which we could begin

to interpret the lives of these young people in institutional contexts such as public school music education, to look at how to change practices.

An interesting thing happened through the research period that I was only later told about by a parent of a participant. This parent told me of one of the participants who had experienced unimaginable struggles throughout her entire life. The other students were hyper-aware of these struggles, and for this reason, had worked to include this student in the research project through every step of the process, *without my knowing*. When I thought back on the whole year, I could in fact remember certain points in which this student who seemed to be struggling, managed to stay engaged in the Song Writer's Club. I often wondered how this was possible.

If students sing and tell their stories to one another in meaningful ways, they may just alter the world around them. At the very end of the research year, I saw the emergence of new notions of family and community in the Song Writer's Club from the student participants. I believe their ethical engagements in the project depicted in stories such as the one just described, and filled a gap in our school and community. Research indicates that students from non-privileged backgrounds are up against "invisible fences" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012, p. 2), shutting them out of participating in high school arts programs that might assist them in envisioning better futures. How are we to begin removing these invisible fences, intensified by the marketization of schools, to promote more inclusive participation of young people in school and society, if not through cultivating empathetic and kind actions with our young people? If strong communities are comprised of strong individuals, then it stands to reason that any kind acts developed with, for, and by youth will assist with the development of better, more sustainable communities in the long run. In this endeavor, an understanding of the biographies of young people within their social and historical contexts and institutions is crucial.

Summary: Embracing the Controversy

Miss L: What's your definition of engagement in music-making? Like what does it mean to you?

Jake: Kinda hard to say. Do you mean, uh, like the feeling of when you know you're making something good? Or you're, you're kind of, uh, I see it just kind of something goes off in your head that you're really doing something I guess. I think that art really is what sets us apart from animals in the sense that we actually have cognitive thought.

After listening to 25 students in the Song Writer's Club and comparing it with the research in youth studies, there was not one single formula for school engagement which fully described the experience of each young person. Each student had their own way of describing their experience of engagement in music-making in and outside school. As these students found themselves in the same space in the Song Writer's Club, they no doubt picked up ways of speaking from one another which made it nearly impossible to associate ways of speaking and personal expressions with any one group in particular. Youth identity is in a constant state of fluid change and transformation (DeNora, 2000; Green, 2005; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; O'Toole, 2005; Saunders, 2010; Tilleczek, 2011, 2014), particularly in a rapidly changing digital landscape (Stald, 2008). The research indicates that the lives of young people are complex in an era of post modernity (Tilleczek, 2011, 2012, 2014; Tilleczek et al., 2011). An interpretive approach to doing research with young people invites s us to understand their unique lives and how they generate meaning from their worlds as individuals in all that they do in school and community contexts. The young people engaged in my dissertation research project were helping to fill in a gap in understanding about what needed to change in schools in order for students to hear and see themselves on a daily basis.

In terms of music education, we have recognized the bifurcation between the musical lives of students in and out of school (Regelski & Gates, 2009). We now need to develop a new set of working principles, based upon what we know of the diversity of our students, and that validates their individual lives and perspectives. Cavicchi (2009) alerted music educators of a systemic barrier to embracing such approaches:

> Shaping a music curriculum around open encounters with diverse conceptions of 'music-making' at the primary or secondary level may not be possible or desirable, given the age and maturity of a given group of students; the professional pressures of having to meet mandated learning objectives, as well as state or national standards; and the needs of particular communities, the members of which, after all, may have a vested interest in promoting one kind of musicking over another (p. 105).

As a music teacher in the public education system, I can certainly understand how difficult it is to nurture individual musical preferences. For example, when expected to produce performing ensembles for school and community events, it is a necessity to produce an ensemble with a uniform sound and expression. But with the urgency to develop more engaging processes and practices in public school programs, we need to find ways to carve out spaces of belonging with, for, and by young people in school. As such, the Song Writer's Club, which existed outside/ inside the formal school music program, accomplished such a feat.

This research work leads me to make a passionate plea to music educators: Engage the controversy and take a stand. Be mindful of these young musical lives dwelling in our classrooms and seek out openings through which they relate key concepts to their own learning processes. Let them teach us and remain open to conversations with students about what comprise these key concepts. Be open to differences of opinion, and work to re-shape your

programs with students, parents, administrations, and local school boards. Find ways to nurture individual musical interests as a norm within a collective group of students in the school and/or larger community. Developing self-other interactions will create strong communities in the long run.

Fabian (1990) similarly warned readers about using the arts to advance political agendas, which he calls *political naïveté*, and discussed how pre-written texts could be picked up by, and inevitably serve the interests of, "the oppressor" (p. 17). As a teacher, I had witnessed ideas from below swept away and used by those in positions of power to serve the ends of privileged individuals. I would be deeply troubled to see the continuance of music education practices which continue to privilege some students while pushing aside struggling young voices whose profound musical insights made the research meaningful.

To avert the ill effects of this political naïveté, I made certain that the students, their parents, the school, and school board were made aware of the rich learning experience their children received and co-constructed at every point in the process. The lines of communication were kept open for the duration of the period of data collection. With four public performances; two written newsletters; the dissemination of student work via the school and school board website; research themes reported to the students in power point presentations on two occasions, and to their parents on one of those occasions; there were many occasions for continuous feedback and communication among the group. It was the idea of the students themselves to copyright the website with the title "© 2013 Sydney Academy Song Writers." These young people knew that the work they did was their own. Their stamp was upon it at every turn. Most importantly, the enthusiasm and passion with which they developed their musical ideas made my dissertation research possible. This research spoke, sang, and played in the voices and

instruments of the young people with whom I collaborated. Together, we made certain to facilitate a rich learning experience that no one could take from them. In the next chapter, I will describe in more detail how the students went about creating spaces of belonging in the Song Writer's Club, and some of the complexities surrounding difference which they felt needed to be valued to a greater extent within the school and greater community in music-making contexts.

Chapter 6: Putting Yourself Out There

The last chapter described some of the interpretations of engagement in music-making described by the students in the Song Writer's Club. We established in the Club that there were multiple ways of expressing musical ideas. I asserted that as educators, we needed to "embrace the controversy" in order to find new ways of enhancing these varied, youthful, musical expressions. These students were concerned about the formation of positive social connections, or belonging, within the Club's space, which they needed to assist them to feel confident in their skills and abilities. I concluded Chapter 5 with the statement that young people need to carve out spaces of belonging in school in collaboration with adults.

This chapter entails a more thorough description of how the students and I collaborated to develop such spaces through music-making practices in the Song Writer's Club. The issue of how to go about this came up in the process of the efforts of the songwriter's to put themselves out there through musical performance in the school and greater community. The Club was comprised of diverse musicians who were interested in multiple genres of music: indie, emo, ska, punk, metal, folk, pop, classical, jazz, and so on. Our challenge was to co-construct an atmosphere and pedagogy which placed these different embodied interpretations of music in conversation with one another in ways that would reverberate in and outside the classroom. This chapter addresses research question two: *How do students articulate their perceptions and experiences of engagement in music-making?*

Through these embodied musical interpretations, the students became more conscious of deeper social justice issues, which they felt inhabited music-making as a set of cultural practices in the Cape Breton region. As a reaction to this injustice, the students engaged in a particular musical performance project as part of their own ethical trajectory to define the school musical culture by validating musical genres not often represented in schools: "By presenting cultural

others on stage, performers display living bodies who participate in the ongoing process of making culture" (Pelias, 2008, p. 189). Through a pedagogy that welcomed different musical genres, the students were able to reflect upon how local interpretations of music in education and industry might serve as an "ordering device of embodied agency" (DeNora, 2000, p. 89); possibly compelling some students to participate in the Song Writer's Club.

The negotiation of the diverse musical interests in the Club was explored through musical performance, discussed in the interviews, and applied to the running of the Club to further the engagement of students. As the teacher and researcher, I reflected on my own teaching practices such as the set-up of the classroom space that could welcome the songwriters from different musical backgrounds. I reflexively engaged the students in dialogues aimed at enhancing the space in ways that might support students to put themselves out there as they expressed in their interviews.

Preparing the Space

Gandhi: I think just if you [pause] having it in an environment that people are comfortable being themselves in, is really important. So I think if we can provide that, pretty much the rest will follow. 'Cause people won't be like afraid, like, sitting like in the dark afraid to show people who they are. Because everyone else is showing themselves who they are because everyone just is comfortable here. It's almost like a family.

Jake: The Club--there's a lot less condescension or pretention among music classes or art classes than there is in academic things. There's less of a hierarchy of students and a lesser level of it, and generally everyone's treated as an equal and it's kind of friends with each other and, from the common interest. I think if it was

implemented into the classes there would be; people would probably be more friendly with each other; a bit more open, probably the learning experience would be more interesting, 'cause there's, as we all know [pause] sitting there, taking notes, can get kind of stale.

Miss L: [We both laugh slightly] Right. This is a very interesting idea. You're talking about hierarchy. Do you feel that there are hierarchies within schools? You know. Um, in classes? In how people are treated, and this sort of thing?

Jake: Yeah, generally if someone gets high marks, or generally is liked by the teacher. It's not even; it's not like anyone's fault. It's kind of a natural thing, but there generally is in classes, normally preferred people over others whether it be for academics or personal reasons.

Both Gandhi and Jake spoke of an intangible aspect of their experiences in music-making (and arts education) in the school that set it apart from other school experiences. I had a brief follow-up interview with Gandhi to seek further clarification as to what created this feeling of family and comfort. He replied that everyone within the classroom space had a "common interest. Everyone wants to learn about music." He further explained how he had been in "many other music rooms." More often than not, there was a "cold and distant feeling" within those spaces. But within the music room in which the research was housed there was a "warm and fuzzy feeling." The statements of Gandhi spurred me to examine my musical background to discover what had compelled me initially to set up the music room in a certain way.

I believe my own experience resisting eurocentric, male-dominated discourses in the arts influenced my view of music-making. Collins (2000) spoke of community spaces for Black women in which they did not experience "objectification as the Other" (p. 101). These spaces

included, “extended families, churches, and African-American community organizations” (pp. 100-101). I thought about my own positive experiences singing in church, dancing in community dance concerts, and my overall involvement the performing arts with the local dance school. These spaces for me were welcoming to my personal expressions of creativity that I felt was absent from my secondary schooling. I remember the sounds of the music-making of my two brothers, younger sister and me in our church: the reverberation of our voices with the choir or singing the psalm as soloists at weekly Sunday mass, the deep thunderous roll of the organ as we accompanied soloists and the choir for weddings, funerals, and midnight mass, and the haunting resonances of my flute and the oboe of my sister accompanying singers for the *Exultat* at the Easter vigil. The warmth of these sounds played a crucial role in my understanding of how music could be an integral part of spiritual growth.

Early on in my teaching practice, I embraced a trajectory for music-making revolving around similar concepts of space which were reflected in the design of the music class. My thinking was that if students were to develop their music-making abilities, the space itself had to be conducive to music-making in its many forms through nurturing listening practices that were engaging for young people. I reflected on the design of the recently constructed classroom space in which the research was being housed. I was a member of the school steering team for our building renovation project in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia from 2001 to 2008. I was able to advocate for the construction of a new music room that included the addition of a recording studio within the classroom space. Two practice rooms were part of the construction process. I saw to it that they could be set up as isolation booths for recording purposes. Each of these iso booths contained patch bays with microphone and ¼ inch input jacks. These patch bays were connected through in-line wiring to a larger central patch bay inside the classroom. From

here, connections were made to the class M-Box, computer, rack-mount, and headphone monitor.

Burke and Grosvenor (2011) described how the "aurality" of the school created an atmosphere of control exerted by adults over children, in traditional forms of schooling. The sounds produced in such traditional schooling practices, "were part of the rhythmic pedagogic apparatus which transformed the child into a *school* child, into a subject of school culture, and prepared him/her for their future regulated workplace lives" (p. 328). In "The hearing school," Burke and Grosvenor described the control of student sensory experiences by adults within schools during the first half of the 20th century. By contrast, attempts were made to modernize approaches to schooling during the latter half of the 20th century that produced a very different sound of schooling in the sixties and seventies:

> The 'hum' of activity – children moving around the classroom going about their allotted tasks in a variety of groupings and settings – was characteristic of some of the more progressive educational environments of the postwar period and it was these patterns of activity that architects attempted to support through design in their planning of new schools (p. 337).

In the same article, Burke and Grosvenor (2011) distinguish between *hearing* and *listening* within schools, taking note of the fact that "'listening' suggests a key aspect of the 'power dynamic' between the teacher and the taught" (p. 338). Burke and Grosvenor also spoke of the senses being interwoven (p. 339). Attention needed to be paid to the seeing and hearing worlds of young people when trying to address their learning needs through sensory experiences in schools.

DeNora (2000) spoke of the ways in which the bodies of people are aligned by music in everyday life as latching (latching onto particular music in a given context) and entrainment: "Musically entrained, the body and its processes unfold in relation to musical elements" (p. 78). Musical entrainment can be described as how the body situates itself within an environment through interaction with music. Using the language of DeNora, the "warm and fuzzy" feeling spoken about by Gandhi, might very well be described as a result of the student latching onto the idea of the studio as a space where they could develop a sense of agency and autonomy in their music-making without the interference of the maestro and her baton. I would add that many students in the Song Writer's Club demonstrated their entrainment of the studio idea through recurrent music-making in this space housed in the classroom. The classroom was set up for ensemble performance initially (see Figure 11). The challenge for the Song Writer's Club was to collaborate with me to rethink the actual set up of the classroom from a more youth-attuned perspective which we hoped would encourage them to bring their unique musical expressions into the Club. In a process that began during my years teaching music at Sydney Academy, we dialogued, and negotiated the space to suit the needs of the Club: Jam spaces to work in groups (see Figure 12), a recording studio to capture their work (see Figure 13), and song circles to share their work with the larger groups (see Figure 14). In the months ahead, we worked together to develop, improve, and transform the space continually to support the musical growth of these young people. People visiting the space often commented on the students being absorbed in their learning at the various centers.

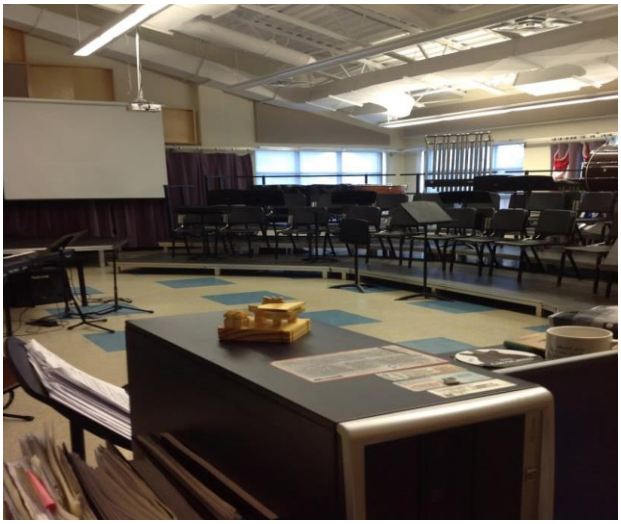

Figure 11. Photograph of the music class in which the Club met on a weekly basis. Classroom initially set up for traditional ensemble rehearsals including concert band and concert choir.

Figure 12. Reconfigured music classroom to accommodate rehearsals for smaller bands in the Club. Bringing together the drum set, guitar, amplifiers, and microphone for the singer in this instance.

Figure 13. Studio recording space located within the music classroom.

Figure 14. Using the music classroom space to facilitate a Song Writer's circle in the Club. Students and their instruments are arranged in a circular fashion to facilitate sharing of musical ideas across diverse genres.

According to the research, the observations of Gandhi with respect to the "warm and fuzzy feeling" of family and comfort were part of the sensory experience of these young people in the Club (Burke & Grosvenor, 2011) which figured prominently in their engagement in music-making as a space for sharing ideas: "It [music] is not a 'force' like gravity or wave power. It is a potential 'source' of bodily powers, a resource for the generation of bodily agency" (DeNora, 2000, p. 102). From a more critical standpoint, setting up the classroom from a youth-attuned perspective de-centered my power and opened up the space to greater collaboration and listening among the students as active agents in the Club, and between the students and me:

Ché: Um, I think my ideas as well as everybody else's in the Club have sort of made a mixing pot of ideas, because everybody has their say, and they get to put it in the colander and mix it up. And it's like, 'Ok, well this is the decision; this is the product of our ideas.' And everybody gets to see that portrayed in the Club. It gives everybody a sense of power, because they all had a bit of a [pauses; trying to find the words].

Miss L: Had a say in it?

Ché: Um hm.

Miss L: Ok, now how have your ideas influenced the teaching and learning and the running of the Club? And the different facets?

Ernold: Um, I'm not sure how my ideas would have uh, in particular, but I know that like the group is really open to opinions. So it's; it's really good in that sense, and um, I wouldn't be surprised if everyone's opinions played a role in everything, because it's; it's really um, it's really open to opinions. It's open to everyone's opinions, which is good.

Gertrude: Yeah, I think um, I think everyone's opinion was definitely listened to, and respected in the Club. I would say that my biggest thing was, really working it out and making sure that we had it right, rather than just kind of like, really just working through the kinks. And I think that everyone really loved that; like everyone appreciated that idea and I think everyone had that goal. So it was nice to be surrounded by like-minded people in that sense.

Jake: I'm not overtly vocal, but I'd say that whether big or small, everyone's made a contribution essentially to the ideas of the Club in some shape or form. I'm not too sure what I might have added to it or not. Yeah, I'd say everyone had a contribution, though.

WGBG

At just past the halfway point in the school year and data collection the atmosphere in the Club shifted slightly. A few students seemed to come and go, and I was trying to get a clear sense of what was causing these shifts. So I asked the students in the hallways, in the cafeteria and so on, "What exactly was going on?" I received mainly shrugged shoulders.

So as not to betray the confidence of those persons who spoke to me about the following phenomenon, I tried my best to speak in the most general of terms. Of course, as the students re-read this story, they would know exactly the incident and individuals about whom I spoke, having been present when we dialogued about what was happening in the Club.

The students narrowed down our problem to an observable phenomenon in the local music industry on our beautiful little island, which had found its way into the Song Writer's Club. One of the students observed that the industry seemed to be catering to and encouraging the kind of musical production which could best be summed up as *WGBG*. This acronym was

shorthand for "White girl behind the guitar." I first heard these words uttered by this student the day before one of our Wednesday, after school, Club meetings. The very next day, the group was jumping up and down with the anticipation of talking about the whole issue.

We organized ourselves into a circle, and proceeded to go around the circle to air our views on the matter. Interestingly enough, the girl who brought the matter to our attention happened to be both white, a guitar player, and a skilled singer-songwriter. She seemed surprised and concerned about how the industry was producing this kind of musician and holding them up on a platform above all others.

The conversation had many nuances, including the belief of several students that the WGBGs were really just those musicians who were most attractive to the male industry workers controlling much of the capital in the region. Others stated, "Well that's what the industry wants, so that's what we need to give to them." Realizing we could be in part reproducing similar inequalities in the Song Writer's Club, this idea was rigorously opposed by several other members of the Club. These group members believed they would be selling out to change their style to suit the industry: "Stay true to yourself." "Be who you are." Others felt that some students might not feel they matched up to the industry ideals, and be deterred from trying to put themselves out there in the Club or in other music-making spaces in the community. Another student (Bartholomew) tried to clarify the issue, stating, "Let's not confuse 'selling-out' with 'success.'" Students discussed the issue further, and there were those who asserted it could be equally oppressive to have a non-white female or male behind the guitar.

What emerged from the dialogue (which was more akin to a series of heated arguments) was an observation by the students of the exclusion of participation of young people from music-making in various school and community contexts due to not fitting into certain images of the

musician. The male musical geniuses (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2010) of the past seemed to have been replaced by females from the perspective of some of the students in the Song Writer's Club. If it was true that the music industry was still largely run by men, many of the students felt the industry was producing these new female artists who were pleasing to their masculine ideals in a sexual manner. Consequently, they suspected more diverse female voices were being silenced and excluded from the music-making scene in the school and community. By engaging in a critical discussion of what they understood to be a possible injustice through music-making, the students revealed their understanding of what Smith (1990) meant by how "appearance may be controlled by a woman but its intended meaning is established by discursive texts outside her control" (p. 182). The students had revealed their understanding of what Smith meant in this quotation by engaging in a critical discussion of what they understood to be a possible injustice through music-making. This was not to take away the accomplishments of the young women forming part of a new group of emerging artists in Cape Breton. In fact, the student who won a local competition that year was a friend of some of the students in the group, and a member of the school choir at the time. However, the dialogue surrounding WGBGs was an effort on the part of some of the young people engaged in the dissertation research to discuss how the particular model of young musician, created in school and society, could serve as a site for exclusion and silencing of young voices.

The conception of talent seemed to figure prominently into the discussion as well. Magdalen had revealed to me in her interview that students were being encouraged in school music programs based upon narrow interpretations of what constituted musical talent. It would seem that her perception was indeed correct as research indicated that arts education institutions have generated discourses surrounding talent in ways that continue to advantage some students

over others (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013a). Her remarks came back to me during the WGBG discussion and became the theme in our fugue analysis of the connection between knowledge and power, which aimed to find new approaches to music education practices and processes in the Club (Giroux, 1985; Smyth, 2011) (see Figure 15).

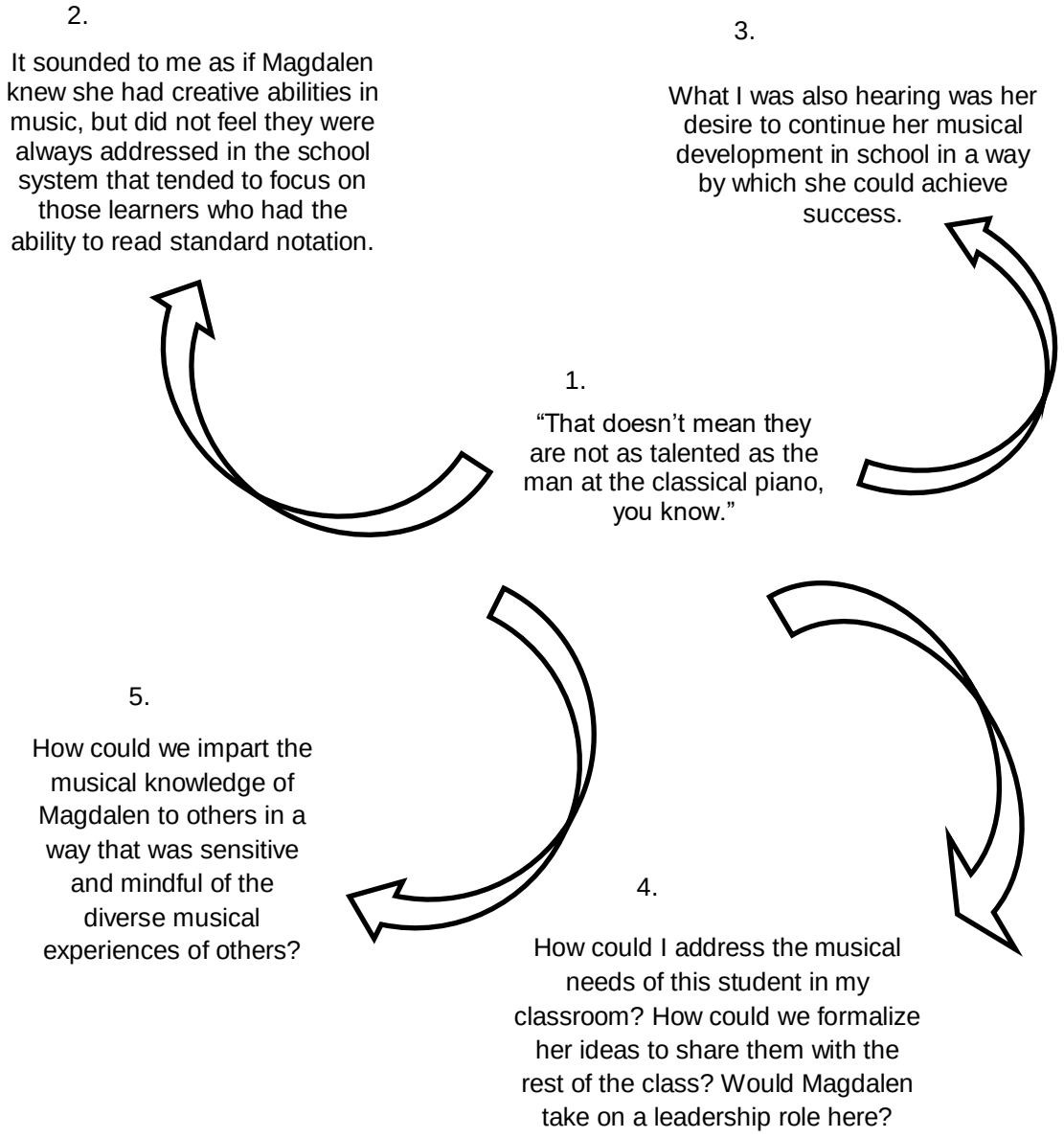

Figure 15. Fugal analysis of the notion of talent perpetuated by music education institutions. Multiple entry points of students into the dialogue surrounding what it means to be talented and how to change narrow views of talent through musical performance.

I believe these young people showed abundant, critical insight into culture, society, and how perceptions and ideas of young people can be produced in very particular ways by the market in schools and the greater community, leading possibly to their disenfranchisement from school and community life (Smyth, 2011; Smyth & McInerney, 2012). I was not sure at what point there was a lull in the dialogue and all eyes turned toward me: the teacher. "Oh dear," I thought. "I need to be so very careful here." I heard myself say very slowly and thoughtfully, "Well, this is the landscape of the local industry. Now that you are aware of how things are, you can make decisions as to how, and if, you would like to participate in it, and in the process of that participation, or lack thereof, to create change. Through working with others, keeping an open mind, and most of all, through dialogue." The students paused for a moment to think about this, as the words of Cruikshank (1999) ran through my mind, "The political itself is continually transformed and reconstituted at the micro-levels of everyday life where citizens are constituted. . . . The citizen is an effect and an instrument of political power rather than simply a participant in politics" (p. 5).

My words were clear to them: Get out there and be a part of things and create change by staying true to yourself. Change those sounds and images of music education and industry through your music-making! In the words of MacKenzie Applebottoms, "Like, sing your heart out. If you feel all this, who cares?" The transformation of music education were performed by these young people continuously throughout the period of data collection; bringing to light those "missing texts" in music education that Fabian (1990) had so aptly discussed. It was shortly after our conversation about WGBG that the idea of the rock show took form. The students spread the word throughout the school that a show would take place during second semester. One of the students designed a poster to begin promoting the event (see Figure 16). The after-school

research sessions took on a whole new meaning as students prepared to put themselves out there at the event. My general sense from what the students were telling me was that their musical performances represented their voice, and identity. Performing their songs was the best means of putting themselves out there and being heard. Their performances were a means of speaking back against exclusive practices in music-making; particularly those narrow interpretations of artists which they felt were growing in the school and community. The excitement seemed to build at every phase of the process with the formation of new bands, emergence of new singer-song writers, and impending auditions for the rock show in a process I described earlier in Chapter 5.

Figure 16. Publicity for the Rock Show produced by the Club members. Poster depicts the student desire to perform music which is relevant to the lives of young people such as themselves.

How It's Done: Cats 'n Tea 'n Ridiculousness

To continue to deconstruct music education practices with the students, and to continue to bring these missing voices into the center of the classroom during the Song Writer's Club meetings, I examined the collaborative processes of the students during their songwriting sessions. During the interviews, I asked the students to describe their own methods of preparing their songs:

Miss L: Um, so within your group, how do your ideas about, like, the teaching and learning of music and how it's put together—how do you have an influence in your group?

Halia: We all kinda just, for now we're working on our own, and then like bringing it to the group and like working together 'cause we all do like different stuff and like, for ****[song name deleted], I wrote the guitar, like the rhythm, and then gave it to Effy and let him tweak it, and then he gave it to Irlen, and then Irlen wrote the lead. And that's just kinda the way we work off each other, I guess.

Miss L: That really functions well in your group you find?

Halia: Yeah. Loudness . . . loudness . . . ridiculousness [we both start to laugh]. Cats and tea.

Miss L: What's your genre?

Halia: Our genre right now is kinda pop/funk, but I can feel it moving into a more, like, um, not like new metal but like just harder stuff I think . . . . Especially as my voice gets like more mature and stuff and I can do more with it.

Miss L: Ah, neat!

Halia: And as we practice together and get a good sound together it will probably change into something else. Pop/funk is usually where people just start off, and then, branch out.

Miss L: Ah . . . I didn't know that [Halia nods insistently].

Miss L: So, OK, now how do you think, like, do your ideas, your personal ideas, how do they influence your small group in the Club? Like, so you, Halia, and Irlen kind of thing? Do you feel that your ideas; your voice is heard within your small group?

Effy: Yeah. Because most of the time, me and Irlen will sit down and write riffs, and sometimes they don't really match up, like we'll play one rhythm, and then it will switch to another one, and then I'll have to find a way to link them together, and like whatever, the prechorus we didn't know what to play to go into the chorus, so I; I made it up myself, and it's just [pause] it all came together. And Irlen was like,'how did you do that?' [We both laugh.]

Miss L: How do your ideas influence Effy and Halia? On the whole?

Irlen: I'd say it's not so much about influencing each other with us, um, it's more about putting together everything we have. Um, like when I write something it's not Effy. Like Effy will come up with drums for it if I wrote it first, right? But it's his drum line. Like he makes it up. Like he's the one who feels the drums and adds them where he thinks they should be. And it's the same with everybody in the band.

Miss L: Um, OK, how do you feel your ideas about music-making; that is, your own ideas influence, um, the teaching and learning of the music in the Club? It could be within your small group, for instance. How do you feel?

Rick: The way it feels, like, everybody should put their ideas in, like, I mean Walter will jam sometimes—just me and him. We'll be playing and then sometimes, he'll do something that I don't know how to do, and I'll ask him how he does it, and he'll show me how to do it. And I'll play something that he doesn't know how to do and we'll show each other. Basically if you just all get together and play with each other, then you'll learn a lot from each other.

Miss L: What would you think it would take to take your ideas that you have within your smaller group setting and apply that to the larger Club for instance? Like when we're talking about in an organization? How might that come about?

Rick: Well, uh [pause]. Just talking would help a bit. Like just talking to each other, and basically just play with each other. Everybody in the group, in the Song Writer's Club – like you can't force someone to play with another person 'cause it's not the same thing but like, most musicians I find wanna play with other people they never played with before because it opens up, like [pause], but uh, a lot of people I know, it's like they have to be on the same skill level as each other to play with each other. But I don't find I'm like that, unless the person is like just picked up a guitar [laughing slightly], and still don't know how to play any basic chords or anything. But if they can basically get some basic chords, it's pretty easy to play with one another, and they can learn off you. And I find it's just easier to learn from each other.

Joe: Oh, well me and Lee, we both write songs, and we play them for each other. And I guess that rubs off on each other, like [pause]. So like, he could use like, he

could maybe take one of my lyrics, and change it so it's his own thing, and then be like both of our things.

Miss L: Now how have your ideas influenced the teaching and learning of the Club?

Joe: Well I think my songs might have influenced my friends. Like because they might have liked my songs, and then, they'll make a song and I can kind of hear a resemblance in some of their songs? . . . Like we uh, we kind of like put ideas in each other's heads.

Miss L: Right. Oh, OK. So that's really major. Do you want to talk a little bit about that? How do you put ideas in each other's heads? You just share them?

Joe: Yeah, we just share. We just play our songs for each other, and like um, we could like, add some things to each other's songs; like saying, "I think you should add this guitar solo here, or [pausing]"

Miss L: [I am fascinated at this point] So you guys like…you come and you listen to each other's stuff and comment on it?

Joe: Yeah.

Miss L: And you don't mind? Nobody feels like they're being told what to do or anything?

Joe: No. No we don't.

Miss L: That's really good.

Joe: Like we send each other like whenever we make a new song we send it to each other over Facebook . . . And then we'll just tell each other what we think of it.

In the interviews above, I heard numerous collaborative methods of song writing based upon relational thinking by which the students seemed to interrupt and decenter the "authority"

in their groups. This phenomenon described by the students was one I touched upon briefly in a provincial teaching journal in the spring of that year. Many of the students were intent upon collaborating to write songs in their groups, which placed the emphasis on the group as opposed to the individual. I also noticed how the students seemed to develop very fluid notions of musical styles that they were constantly defining and redefining as they jammed with one another. It was often the case that through immersing themselves in cover songs of their choices in and outside school, the students naturally began writing their own songs in similar styles. According to the students, working within their own genres influenced their musical development, while helping them push the boundaries of these genres and changing them slightly. In the song "Whatever" by The Ocelots, one could hear resonances of punk, metal, rock, screamo, and emo described by the group as their "main musical influences." The students often heard something new each time the song was shared, mixed, and remixed in studio. For example, the group working with Andrew recorded two versions of "Falling Further." One can hear in this song the change and progression from the initial version of the song and its remixed version.

The student embodiments of music-making through processes such as jamming, song writing and audio recording revealed their engagement within the project in youth-attuned spaces from which the students could share their creative musical insights from their worlds with adults such as myself.

Selfie

Cruikshank (1999) is a political theorist who studies the relationship between knowledge and power in society. She asserted that individuals play an important role in the creation of a just society through their actions in the world:

> Too much is left out by critics of the self-esteem movement who continue to think of power and resistance in paired oppositions: individual and collective, public and private, political and personal. What these criticisms omit, I contend, is the extent to which the citizen is (like inequality, poverty, and racism) the product of power relations, the outcome of strategies and technologies developed to create everything from autonomy and empowerment to self-esteem (p.103).

Despite the innovative collaborative song writing processes uncovered by the students and shared in their interviews with me, there were voices still not being heard within the Club even as we struggled to develop these youthful, embodied spaces of belonging. I noticed a number of students were not engaging in musical performance, although they were attending all the meetings after school. During the interviews, when I asked them why they were not performing, the common response was that they did not feel ready. I decided to probe this a bit further in light of the events surrounding the WGBG incident and the rock show auditions. A number of students expressed in their interviews their feelings of shyness in the Club. They felt overwhelmed by some of the other students who seemingly had more experience than they did. I was particularly concerned that in every case, these comments came from younger members of the Club, in grades ten or eleven. For various reasons, some of the younger students were having difficulties putting themselves out there:

> Miss L: So how have you and your ideas influenced or added to or in some way shaped the Club?
>
> Kathryn: Um, in the Club I don't exactly speak out a lot because I am, like, I don't come off as it, but I am shy. Like I don't like sharing ideas, and you look at me weird when I say that [I laugh slightly—Kathryn is anything but shy], but I actually am!

Miss L: No, I believe you.

Kathryn: And I know the people in Song Writers, and they are judging. Like they do judge you.

Miss L: They're "judgy?"

Kathryn: They're "judgy." They do judge you. Like they look at you and you can feel it. Like they look straight into your soul and they're like, "I'm judging you, 'cause like I learned how in like grade four. I learned how to judge you." Yeah, that's what they do.

Miss L: So, how have your ideas influenced others?

Panda: I . . . uh . . . I don't know. I never really felt like they did to be honest. 'Cause it's kinda like I'm the smaller voice within a big crowd here. I mean like . . . [Panda's voice trails off, and she searches for words.].

Miss L: Ah . . . You missed some meetings.

Panda: Yeah. Well I can't. I have community service and I can't.

Miss L: Oh, I didn't know that.

Panda: Yeah, well when I say work, Mum wants me to tell everybody it's work so they don't think I'm a disobedient, troubled child.

Miss L: Oh, gotcha. So that's why you're missing meetings.

Panda: If it didn't start at like exactly, like it can vary 'cause sometimes they want me in right after school. Sometimes they'll want me in like, I dunno—4:30, or like 5 o'clock. Or, they don't tell me. They just like, they'll call me up and they'll randomly like, talk to me, and they'll be like 'we need you like, now,' and I'll be like . . . [makes a sound like she has to rush to get away].

Miss L: Now what would you like to see done in the Club? What would you like to see more of ?

Ernold: Hm . . . I think more performances would be fun. It would give us more of a chance to try out more songs and try more options.

Miss L: Right . . .

Ernold: Get more . . . [searching for words]

Miss L: Become better?

Ernold: Yeah, become better and get more experience for like performing, and you know, maybe feel more confident up in front of people.

Miss L: So you really like performing, do you?

Ernold: Yeah, and like something I really feel I should work on personally is like, um, being comfortable in front of people because I'm a really shy person.

When I heard comments such as these, I made note of them, and shared their general ideas in a presentation with the whole group. A dialogue erupted following my presentation at which time it was stated that a hierarchy in the Club was emerging which was inhibiting some of its members from fully engaging in musical performance. I was interested to see how the students would discuss and meet this challenge and was present to support their struggle. Listening to two of the older students in the final round of interviews indicated to me that they had thought deeply about the issue. They were engaging in power relations in the Club through their direct involvement in running it and from this position, they were reflecting upon their own engagement in music-making processes. Magdalen reflected on her engagement in a critical manner with respect to the younger Club members:

Miss L: So how have your ideas influenced the teaching and learning of the Club?

Magdalen: Well you know me. I was never afraid to say anything to anyone [We both laugh slightly]. I had to tone that down [in a reflective tone]. I, I realized I was like, "I think I'm scaring some people." But um, like I was telling Erlin, that um, you know. They, I felt that sometimes we were being looked up to, and, uh, we, we put our best foot forward for them. And we learned as much as we could from them as well. Like, you know, I spent a lot of time helping and even getting tips on my own music with these students and you know, they just . . . they're awesome! Every single one of them. And like, I really hope that they continue to do it, and rock out, because it's just incredible what we've done here.

By contrast, Halia understood her engagement in the Club as having a positive affect on the young students:

Miss L: How have your ideas; your ideas, and you especially in grade twelve, right? How have your ideas influenced the teaching and learning in the Club? Especially with some of the younger members?

Halia: I think that although some of the younger; like the girls, seem a little like intimidated and stuff by grade 12s. I think when I was in grade ten, I was like, I looked at the grade 12s like, "OK, that's what I want to do in grade twelve." And I feel like, I hope I might have shown them what progress they can make just through sticking with music in school, and now that this Club is, *like it exists* [emphatically stated], I mean, they have like a great opportunity that I didn't have all three years.

When I asked Halia to clarify the intimidation felt by some of the younger members in the Club, she indicated that there were some conflicts and little spats which were a result of the younger members wanting to be like some of the older students:

Halia: Well I mean, a little bit of jealousy came out for other people that I saw, so I was like, it's not that they're actually jealous. They can't help it. They just look up to that person and they want to be like them.

This "jealousy" was challenged by one of the younger members who had complained about the older students receiving all the attention. MacKenzie who felt very confident in her own abilities also experienced moments of feeling "shy":

Miss L: What are the barriers to really collaborating?

MacKenzie: Well, I'm like really shy around most people. Like if I'm not; I don't know at least a little about you, it's really hard for me to be comfortable around you. And it like, how do I put this in words? I dunno. I just have to know a little bit about you or I have to be around people that I'm comfortable with, and the person that I don't know very well in order for me to really know them. And then that's how I expand my friend zone. It's 'cause I came with new people [from Ontario last year]. They have no friends. I make them my friends, and it just grows endlessly.

Miss L: Good. Did you find it got better this year the second semester, too, MacKenzie, in terms of like, the older people were getting more attention at first? And then we tried to like, bring the grade tens so that they were more engaged as well? Did you find that improved a little?

MacKenzie: Well last semester it just felt like, "Oh we've been in this class for three years, so we know this stuff." And then there was like "the little grade tens" and like, I've been singing since I was like four. I've had lessons since I was six.

Miss L: Exactly [Encouraging, so MacKenzie can continue to express her feelings, which she certainly seemed to need to do!]

MacKenzie: "I doubt you've had those [spoken as if she was addressing the grade 12s. So don't try to tell me you're better than I am!" That's how it felt.

Miss L: Did it get better, though?

Mackenzie: Yes. The grade 12s and 11s are kind of . . . the 11s, more. They're reaching out to us 'cause they're fresh from that state that the grade 12s have been here for so long that they don't even remember. Like they haven't felt the kind of; like the outcasts of the music room.

Later on in the same conversation, MacKenzie clarified exactly what she felt was happening with some of the older students:

MacKenzie: Some of them just tried to overpower us too much and tried to like, run it, and say like "No, you're not doing it right." It's like, "I'm doing it right."

Similarly, Mary Ruth expressed how inhibited she felt from performing, because so many peers and teachers over time had put her voice "through the shredder" with criticisms.

Despite our collaborative processes, constant dialogue, informal strategies, and alternative pedagogies, a truly perplexing paradox loomed in front of us in the Song Writer's Club. Remembering the first paradox spoken about in Chapter 5, "the pretty music and what it represents are really not pretty at all," it seemed as though the students had revealed another: *the inevitable hierarchy of relationality*. Reflecting back to the political and personal tensions

revealed in the quote by Cruikshank (1999) at the beginning of this section, I wondered how the students would utilize their understanding of the system to discuss and present their personal views of music education and continue the dialogue. This question came to me in full force in hearing the comments of the students about their shyness and lack of self-confidence.

In trying to root out the obstacles to some students in finding ways to be out there, I continued to ask the students in their interviews where the obstacles lay. Einstein put it quite simply: "Ah, I think it's mostly themselves." This comment was later reinforced by Mary Ruth who stated "They're [the obstacles] within you." These two students had internalized the many facets of those musical ruling relations in music education described by the students during the dissertation research, and their remarks seem to indicate this shift. Their statements were a kind of evidence of the ability of students to try to pave a path toward change and transformation from their positions within the Club and to construct a more relevant music education through musical performance and production. This ongoing dynamic and relationship between self and society was being heard. "Institutional ethnography allows one to disclose how matters come about as they do in their experience and to provide methods of making their working experience accountable to themselves . . . rather than the ruling apparatus of which institutions are a part" (Smith, 1987, p. 178). Thinking about the possibilities for self-governance promised by the self-esteem movement described by Cruikshank (1999), I began to consider how the young people in the study might employ music and the arts to find such methods (Smith, 1987) of empowerment within the many lived ruling relations and facets of school life and perhaps to enter into a process of self-actualization as described by Mazlow (1970). Alexis shared a similar view with me during her interview:

Miss L: Should there be more programs like this? Like more Clubs like this?

Alexis: There definitely should 'cause it gives people creativity. It gives them their own voice. They can speak out. They can grow. Because this, like, being in this group . . . it doesn't just help with music. It helps with public speaking, getting along in groups with other people, meeting other people. Like it helps all around.

Breaking free: Tips for the Music Teacher

Miss L: Like if you were to change things about how the curriculum is [pause] so it could even be like when you think back to elementary school, or when you think of junior high or whatever, how do you think music education is [can be] changed? Should it be all big band and stuff?

Effy: No. Because in my experience, the Club and the choir—we don't have a set "You have to do it this way" for it to sound good, method, like. We need to break free from the chains of all this constructed music and do like, improvise. We need to go our own way. We don't want to be slaves to the music for the rest of our lives.

The students used the Club as a part of their own ongoing processes of growth, development and self-governance in ways that revealed possibilities for changes in music education practices. Putting themselves out there had become difficult for some students who felt themselves surrounded by new musical geniuses (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2010, p. 67). In a moment of deep reflection I thought, "Oh my. Due to my performance background, I may be reproducing the very same structures of inequality and hierarchies within the western art model of music education" in a way similarly described by Regelski & Gates (2009), Elliott (2005), and Bowman (2002). I had spent a great deal of time over the years thinking differently about how music was being experienced by young people in their lives. These reflections had changed how I approached teaching and learning in band, choir, and general music classes. The students in the

Song Writer's Club had now added to this repertoire of change. In their interviews, these young people revealed some ideas about music education that could (in the right hands of the interrogated maestro) make the teaching and learning of music more relevant and empowering for young people. Their insights were exceedingly valuable to a maestro trained in the Western music education paradigm based in ensemble performance.

The lessons for embracing relevant, youth-attuned music-making practices and processes in music education as offered by the students centered around three main ideas:

1. Using creative approaches to teaching and learning music that challenge the binaries of formal and informal ensemble practices, thereby resolving the bifurcation between individual and collective musical growth and expression.

2. Collaborating between musicians from different musical backgrounds and experiences.

3. De-constructing the role of the music teacher and/or interrogating the maestro.

Tip #1: Challenging Formal/Informal Binaries and Resolving the Gap

Gertrude had been involved in band programs since elementary school, and she had definite ideas about how music education ought to be practiced at each phase of student development:

> Gertrude: I'd love to see if the Club could come together and write something together as a Club, rather than in their own; like secular bands. Um, because though it is important to have those small groups, it's also good to know how to make a group as a collective, and being able to compromise certain ideas for the greater good, I guess.
>
> Miss L: That's really good.

Gertrude: Yeah, for the bigger idea.

Miss L: Excellent. OK. So you want an ensemble approach in that way, as well as the breaking off of smaller groups. Interesting. Very good. Um, so and what about music education in general? Because in Canada in particular, music education has tended to become very ensemble driven. Ensemble performance driven. So, what do you think might be the place of more sort of creative song writing and jamming? Um, is there a space for that within traditional programs even?

Gertrude: Um, I think when you look at elementaries and junior high you tend to have bigger numbers. So, the ensemble idea is good I guess just for time; time-wise. Um, because you just don't have enough time to [pause] to break everything down.

Miss L: [We both laugh slightly] That's true.

Gertrude: But once you get to high school you see a lot of people who just decided that it's not for them and they drop the program. So I think that once you get to high school, it should be a bigger focus on the creative?

Miss L: Um hm?

Gertrude: I think at the lower level it's good to have the structural learning, um, of [pause] learning of music, and how to read music. But once you get to higher level and once it becomes a smaller group, I think it should be more about the creative, and [pausing to think of the words] . . .

Miss L: More independent?

Gertrude: Yeah, more independent; more learning about maybe, how certain chords come together and what sounds good, so you can do it on your own.

Miss L: What makes a good song?

Gertrude: Yeah.

Miss L: Right . . . gotcha!

Ernold, a student who had much experience in concert band, had a slightly different interpretation of the Club, and suggestions for music education:

Miss L: Um, do you think there's a place for like songwriting, creativity, and more creative pathways in even like your most sort of traditional band setting, whereby you're reading/following a score quite strictly? Um, what do you think might be the role of creativity in music education?

Ernold: I feel like creativity should be a lot more, um, a lot more prevalent, uh, in school band. Probably, I'd say starting at a junior high level.

Miss L: Um hm?

Ernold: Because um, I don't think many other bands do like, the sort of thing we do—like improvise stuff. And I love that. And I'm really not good at it, but . . . I feel like I'm getting better, and I like that. And you know, it really helps me to understand the music; to understand the song, to get a good feel for the key and everything, and I like that. And I feel like it really helps um, your creativity [pause]. And you know, everything. And I feel like that that should be a school-wide thing. Not a school-wide thing. It should be like a board-wide thing I guess. It should be something that happens in all schools.

Miss L: Right [nodding in understanding].

Ernold: Because it's great.

What was noteworthy was how these two students were rethinking how music-making could happen in school music in creative ways which provide opportunities for both group and individual engagements. As it happened, their comments contributed greatly to the integration of various Club members from the school band, choir, general music classes, and one student who was not enrolled in school music, in the performance and recording of a cover tune which spoke intimately to their musical lives as they expressed in their interviews with me.

Another student, Bartholomew, had experienced both formal and informal musicking quite extensively in and outside school. He was a member of the school band, several rock bands in and outside school, and had been giving solo performances as a singer-song writer for several years. Bartholomew spoke about the need to integrate more creative approaches to the study of music that go beyond an understanding of standard notation:

> Miss L: How would you apply some of these ideas in a more sort of alternative way of musicking and music-making, song writing and so on? Does all that apply to music education? Or should music in schools be only ensemble driven?
>
> Bartholomew: I don't think so. It's one of those things where I can learn to play guitar at home on my own.
>
> Miss L: Right.
>
> Bartholomew: I can also probably learn to play a saxophone at home on my own [We both laugh slightly]. And I probably need a teacher to read music, but you know, it's just one of those things. I find there's like a little too much focus on that. And I'm certainly not saying there shouldn't be that sort of traditional thing because it's great. And I've learned a lot of the musical theory from that sort of thing. Which actually is quite a bit because I'm a rock and roll musician. But ah

[laughing], it's really . . . yeah I think they should sort of [pause] there should be more broad range, because really that's only a fraction of the music industry, and I'm certainly not an expert on economic statistics, but it wouldn't surprise me if, I mean, music for a lot of people is a career, right? And it wouldn't surprise me if there's more people making money on more contemporary things than there is in that sort of ensemble. Especially when you've got that many people, it's kinda hard to feed them all. Right?

Miss L: [laughing slightly] How do you pay the orchestra?

Bartholomew: Exactly, so I mean [slight pause], I'm sure some people do manage it, but I suspect it's a lot harder to make a living on that sort of thing. So like I say, I'm not saying it shouldn't happen. But, I think that there should be more than that.

Bartholomew revealed some of the ambiguities surrounding formal and informal musicking in school music while asserting there was a need to find more creative ways of thinking about music education practices that were relevant to young lives.

Halia spoke of what she believed to be a need for a balance between more individual, informal music-making in school and more formal, large ensemble practices. In addition to participating in the Club, Halia was a member of the school choir, a rock band, and had performed a number of solos over the past number of years in and outside school:

Miss L: Um, how do you feel this more creative approach [slight pause] do you think that could apply in more traditional settings? That they [band students, for instance] could learn from that sort of idea?

Halia: Well, I specifically have had multiple vocal teachers throughout my junior high, elementary, and high school experience. And structure works well, but I find like, with you it's like a perfect balance between like creativity and like kinda organized stuff. But like I've had a teacher what was all like you picked the songs together. You did only those songs. That's what you did. And she was quite nice, and we went on trips, and there was like structure. And then on the other extreme, I had a teacher that like only ever wanted to do solo stuff, and only ever wanted to record songs, and only ever wanted to like do little groups, and never wanted to actually work as a group really.

Miss L: Um hm?

Halia: Like it was rare, I think a mix of the two is best. You can't really have one or the other . . .

Einstein was a member of the school choir, and formerly the school band (during her junior high years), as well as a participant in the Club. Her ideas seemed to center around the need to develop creative practices in music education that could best help young people to express themselves:

Miss L: Do you feel those [ideas about writing songs and creativity] could apply more to bands and choirs?

Einstein: Ah, yeah definitely because we just usually get our sheet music and just play it. But now we get to like, express our own, like musical [pause, searching for words] . . .

Miss L: "Selves?"

Einstein: Yeah.

Tip #2: Collaborating

Irlen, who had no formal musical training in school prior to his arrival a year earlier and participation in the school general music program, tried to verbalize how he felt about the program as being applicable to his own personal styles of musicking through collaboration:

> Irlen: Um, music education like you said, it's formal. It's like for the most part, it's formal, it's band, it's ensembles, it's all that stuff. Um, I think music education should be more about helping one person grow as a musician in general, like in their own genre, or like even putting them outside their own genres. But I don't think it can be all that band stuff like [pause] um, I like music classes here a whole lot because it's exactly what I just said [Irlen is also a student in the general music program which includes an audio recording component]. It's you.Your projects are based on your own genres, and you play with other people in the class that are interested in the same stuff, and I think that really works.

During the second round of interviews, Irlen spoke about the general music program at the school in a similar fashion; this time, speaking about all three grade levels of the program:

> Irlen: Uh, as far as the Club and music class go, um, I really do think they work really well. I think uh, like specifically music classes, like the grade ten is more organized or whatever. Then you branch off and like you do recordings and stuff. I really think like, um, that's the best way to do it because like, you learn stuff in the first year, and then you take music the next two years and like you just, you branch off and like ya [pause], ya find your own style kinda thing, and like I really think that's a great way to do a music class.

Also not coming from a background of formal, school-based musical training prior to his entry to the school, participation in the general music program, and Song Writer's Club, Joe had ideas about how the more informally trained musicians could collaborate with formally trained musicians participating in large ensembles:

Joe: Um, do you think it's important to have bands and choirs in school, too? Yeah, it is. Yes, like not everybody wants to sing in a choir. Some people learn different types of music. Rock and stuff.

Miss L: And what about concert band with flutes and clarinets and stuff? Um, do you think that your ideas about music-making can apply even to thee really traditional groups?

Joe: Yeah. There's certain parts of the song, and they want to actually have like a choir or something in it. Or just a group of people shouting in the background. Yeah, that could really work. We could all collaborate.

Miss L: So different kinds of songs in music, even in these very traditional groups?

Joe: Yeah.

Miss L: To kind of change them up a bit?

Joe: Yeah.

Mary Ruth who studied formally in private lessons outside school, and sang in the school choir, had ideas as to how musicians from different musical backgrounds could collaborate:

Miss L: What about music education, um, in general? Like can you see song writing and creativity [slight pause], would that apply to like bands and choirs in these really traditional settings where you're reading something right off the page?

Mary Ruth: I think if you could apply [pause], you could take a song, like you could write a song and you could have the whole choir sing it, or a band play it, I think you could apply it anywhere. Because if you're in that; if you're in choir or band or something, you would already; you would look at the music that was already written so you could have an idea of how to write a piece, and you would just be able to be shared with everyone on a larger basis I guess. Because not everyone can join the Song Writer's Club, or come out to the gigs. But if it's a school related activity then they can actually play more events that you might not hear the Song Writer's at, so their work might get out there more.

Miss L: So, OK. So you're saying that . . . I'm sorry I'm not quite understanding . . . um, yeah. Could you sort of repeat? So, what are you saying needs to be done in music education with the bands and choirs, you think it should be . . . ?

Mary Ruth: It should be, like if you could apply what we're doing at the Song Writer's Club to music education, it's good to have the, like you said, we have the basic songs that we do in band and choir. And it's good to have that criteria. But if you can take your own criteria, and have it put out there more and have others do it like, as groups as a whole and in the school and community, your work would get out there more.

The students from different kinds of musical backgrounds held in mind ways to break free from the constructed music in music education to blend ideas and genres in highly creative ways. They were clearly giving me (the researcher and music teacher) the go-ahead to continue to push the boundaries of music education through collaboration with the students to "change

up" the music itself. From their perspectives, these changes would enable students to express themselves more freely, and to feel more confident putting themselves out there.

Tip #3: Interrogating the Maestro

It had been decided early on by the students and me that we were not in music class so that maestro pedagogy (Bartel, 2004a, 2004b) would need to be left aside to fully hear what students had to say about their engagements in music-making and in school. Their musical engagements could have an impact on how music curriculum was approached as we translated our co-constructed ideas to the greater public via the website, publications, and through other forums.

Singer (2011) discussed the need for students to explore self-other distinctions within diverse settings to work towards change and transformation within the classroom. Singer pushed for a move "beyond a culture of celebration to a culture of integration" (p. 205). For Singer, this integration of different ideas in the classroom is at the heart of "altering its [the curriculum] central force" (p. 205). In the dissertation research, I similarly reflected on how these young people might alter the central force of the curriculum as described by Singer through their music-making practices. One observation that was made by some students was that my role as the teacher was central to creating change in the classroom. They expressed what this role entailed:

> MacKenzie: You're like our mentor. You're not just like, 'Learn it now! And come back to me in another day or two when you know it!' You make sure we're focused. You make sure we have all the assurance we need to learn the song, and inspiration to learn the song, and then once we all know the lyrics, like [you say], 'Here. Why don't you guys try finding a harmony, or like try mixing it up a little bit. Try making it your own.'

While working with the students in dialogic ways which continued to interrupt traditional, hierarchical, top-down, authoritative ways of doing school, my role became different and more akin to a leader of educational experiences (Dewey, 1938) as MacKenzie verbalized above. Another student, Kathryn, verbalized how the power was displaced, from one that was placed solely with the teacher, to one that was a shared power between teacher and students:

> Kathryn: Well, I think like everyone's voice is equally distributed within the Club. Like, everyone's heard mainly because it's not run like [pause]. There is, like the teacher's supervision, which is you. But, um, it's mainly run by us. Like our ideas, like, is what make it up. So, I can't actually think of a way that my voice would be more better heard than what's already going on.

In all three lessons outlined above including the use of creative approaches to challenge binaries and resolve bifurcations in learning, collaborating, and deconstructing the role of the teacher, one central idea emerged. The students needed to hear different musical expressions created by their peers while working in community as a group. The complexity surrounding the development of individual expressions in the classroom was a great challenge. Different ideas did not emerge in a classroom all by themselves. We had to collectively do something as a group to *welcome* them into the classroom.

> Few of us are taught to facilitate heated discussions that may include useful interruptions and digressions, but it is often the professor who is most invested in maintaining order in the classroom. Professors cannot empower students to embrace diversities of experience, standpoint, behavior, or style if our training has disempowered us, socialized us to cope effectively only with a single mode of interactions based on middle-class values (hooks, 1994, p. 187).

The main argument of hooks (1994) was that as educators we needed to think about how to diversify those social processes that contributed to the construction of knowledge within our classrooms if we wanted to develop truly engaging classrooms for all students. How exactly were we to do this? Thinking about my role as mentor was certainly part of it. But I would also be remiss not to describe the clashing ideas and tensions that occurred during my dissertation research. The contradictions revealed by the students and discussed in the group, became defining moments for the Club; moving it forward and causing us to reflect upon and change what we were doing, how we were doing it, and why. As the teacher and researcher, my role entailed a good deal of listening and being open to change and transformation as the students uncovered new ways of doing and thinking about music in the process of our collaborations.

The juxtaposition of different sounds of each group in musical performances, the Club, and jam sessions outside school, produced a reverberation. This reverberation gave a sense of rich sounds resonating throughout our space. Creating such a reverberant classroom was a key to bringing together different sounds. The resonances emanating from these sounds of difference had to be negotiated, jammed out, performed, and transformed to develop classrooms that could invite and validate a plurality of viewpoints. For teachers interested in developing reverberant classrooms, there is a need to become comfortable with the kinds of discomforts that develop from a clash of musical styles and worldviews in our classrooms today. Such clashing produced new opportunities for growth by inviting the students and teacher to reflect, dialogue, critique, and make ongoing changes through musical performance processes and practices. Indeed, these processes fed the interrogation of both the maestro and the spaces in which she developed and dwells.

Summary: Creating Reverberant Spaces

This chapter discussed how the students and I came to co-create a space of musical engagement in the Song Writer's Club by adhering to principles that were evidenced in the research and reflected in the scholarly literature. These five reflective findings are as follows:

1. Paying attention to the sensory worlds of young people (Burke & Grosvenor, 2011).

2. Embodying more youth-attuned practices and processes through latching and entrainment (DeNora, 2000).

3. Developing the Club as an open space for critique and ongoing interrogation of the constraints to engagement due to race, class, gender, and social class as can be tied into institutional discourses of musical "talent" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013a).

4. Using the arts as sources of empowerment to self-actualize (Maslow, 1970).

5. Working towards enhanced self-other interactions by deconstructing music education practices in the Club (Green 2001, 2002, 2005, 2008; O'Toole, 2005).

It was in the process of putting themselves out there that the students and I discovered the need to work to overcome personal hurdles to bring about a reverberant atmosphere in the Song Writer's Club. Einstein and Mary Ruth indicated that they were devising methods of their own to become more engaged in music-making in and outside school through their rich understanding of its musical ruling relations. Their statements which concluded that the obstacles to musical engagement were within displayed a confidence in their ability to balance structure and agency in order to find methods of putting themselves out there in musical performance, through connecting deeply with their own biographies and personal histories in a manner suggested by Tilleczek (2014).

The efforts of Einstein, Mary Ruth and other members of the Club made an impact upon other students within the school music program. After the period of data collection, students from my ensemble classes began to provide input into the program in various ways. In January, 2014, the band and choir were asked to play a concert recruitment tour in three of the junior high schools in the region. When the Song Writers, who had participated in the research group the year prior to this, heard it would only include these ensembles, they quickly communicated with the other Song Writer's in the Club. In an instant, our concert tour included smaller acoustic acts of original work. The most significant part of this, was the fact that it was not only those Song Writers from outside the band and choir who challenged the notion of taking the large ensembles on the road. The opposition originated from musicians *inside* these ensembles. It was the case that many of the original Song Writers had also participated in the band and choir. But, band and choir members who did *not* participate in the Club were adamant that this group perform as part of the whole show. I could not help but notice that the students had furthered their dialogue to communicate their position to others through methods developed in the Club. Freire (1998) suggests that we move beyond dialogue as a learning tool and instead to encompass a communicative method that can lead to greater freedom and democracy when developed in a rigorous, detailed manner. Our message of youth-attuned musical engagements had obviously been communicated among students in the Club and the school music program during our rigorous research processes.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the issue of the inclusion of students in the Club such that the students expressed the importance of "getting noticed" and "being heard." This chapter will also include student ideas about the connection and balance between structure and agency, as they spoke about ways to enhance the Club and implement its principles on a larger scale.

One barrier that persisted from the vantage point of the students was the interpretation of "authority" in school settings. They had various ideas about how to reinterpret this foundational idea in education, which will be explicated in the next chapter. Chapter 7 will set the stage for Chapter 8 which will reveal future directions for the Club and for music education as informed by the Sydney Academy Song Writers.

Chapter 7: Getting Noticed and Being Heard

In the previous chapter, I stated that we need to work with young people in various capacities to create reverberant spaces of belonging. Circling back to Chapter 3 (Figure 2, p. 18), these spaces were created through critical, dialogic, reflexive, performative approaches and processes with, for, and by young people. These processes included an ongoing analysis of the Song Writer's Club in a creative, fugue-like manner. Reverberant spaces were sites in which youth interrogated and internalized those ruling relations to become more fully empowered to work towards greater growth and development. I thought of the term self-actualization (Maslow, 1970) when Einstein and Mary Ruth concluded that the obstacles to putting oneself out there and getting noticed were within. Their observation and opinion was powerful and convincing. I began to interrogate with the students such barriers to their growth by way of self-actualization. Although there are critiques of Maslow, there are possible relevancies that I intend to explore in my future writing, and as I analyse the rest of my data.

Maslow (1970) defined self-actualization as the "intrinsic growth of what is already in the organism, or more accurately of what is the organism itself" (p. 66). Maslow's idea of self-actualization has been criticized, particularly within the field of human psychology as deficient (Neher, 1991), reductionist, ideological, and dehumanist (Geller, 1982). It is worth noting that Maslow (1991) addressed the limits of his own theory of self-actualization:

> Self-actualization is not enough. Personal salvation, and what is good for the person alone, cannot really be understood in isolation. Social psychology is therefore necessary. The good of other people must be involved, as well as the good for oneself, even though it must demonstrate how these are—or may be—synergic (p. 108).

Maslow asserted that self-actualized people developed "some mission in life, some task to fulfill, some problem outside themselves which enlists much of their energies" (p. 134). In this way,

self-actualized persons are connected to people in the world. This may seem paradoxical to the "individuality, detachment, and autonomy" (Maslow, 1970, p. 156) that are traits of the self-actualized person. Masow clarifies that the two characteristics only appear to be paradoxical. "As we have seen, the tendencies to detachment and to need identification and to profound interrelationships with another person can coexist in healthy people" (Maslow, 1970, p. 156). The model of self-actualization had been used to describe the motivation of people towards social democratic movements which were psychologically healthy (Laas, 2006), and in recent research in psychotherapy to examine the relationship between "mindfulness and self-actualization" (Beitel et al., 2014, p. 187). This empirical study found the ideas of Maslow's self-actualized person useful in assisting psychotherapists to develop an "appreciation of the client's autonomy" (Beitel et al., 2014, p. 199). In a similar fashion, this chapter highlights the ways in which the Song Writers spoke of the need for adults to accept them as individual agents in the context of their music-making practices.

Now returning to the work of Dewey (1938) as I discussed in Chapter 1, I wondered if some of the work of Maslow might relate to how the students and I collaborated to create spaces which were "conducive to having experiences that lead to growth" (p. 40) by way of the self-actualization of these young people. My working with the students to integrate their ideas voiced in their interviews and throughout the activities of the Song Writer's Club, was to assist them with their individual musical growth as agents within a social context. In order to fully engage in such a growth process, these young people expressed their need to put themselves out there, in order to get noticed and be heard. Each student had a different interpretation of who needed to hear them in order for them to get noticed. For instance, Effy wanted more people, "like, in Halifax" to know about the music of his band. Mary Ruth wanted more people in school to hear

the songwriters. Joe had created a following on YouTube with the recordings he worked on in the Club and at home. Still others like Wilma and Magdalen were happy to get noticed by family and friends.

When the members of Sydney Academy's Song Writer's Club became mindful of the hierarchy of relationality in school and society, the students voiced their struggles to participate in music-making processes that would help them self-actualize. School music-making was empowering for some students, but not others. The theme of the Club as determined by the students was an inclusive involvement of young people in music-making processes. Therefore, they had much to say about how to become more actively involved in the Club, what direction the Club ought to take, and how these ideas should be applied to school in general. The Club became a space to work through these ideas. As such, there were many days when groups arrived and talked for the duration of the entire session.

This chapter reveals student ideas surrounding barriers to inclusive, youthful empowerment and self-actualization in school. Their ideas centered around the reproduction of authority, stereotypes, and cliques in school which were also found to be present in the Song Writer's Club and other music education institutions such as formal band and choir programs. For example, Mary Ruth suggested that music teachers seemed to have their favorites as to who got noticed or not. As a means of working past these barriers, the students focused on authority as both an impediment and point of resolution to their inclusion. Troubling the interpretation of authority in school was a way of finding strategies to insert their voice into the Club, the school, and the larger school system by examining the balance between structure and agency. Through a creative, fugue-like analysis during jamming, performing, recording, and dialogic processes, the students and I collaborated to develop a trajectory the students felt was more inclusive for the

Club members, and could apply to school life in various contexts. This trajectory was based on a set of principles and approaches that we co-constructed and which we felt were needed to "make things happen." This chapter, therefore, responds to research question number three: *Are student ideas being heard? Why or why not?*

Why are we Deaf?

> Magdalen: Well I believe as teenagers, we can be a bit, you know, angsty, and eaaa! [*sic*] "I don't want to talk to adults [in a mocking tone]." But we need to. We need to speak up, and we need to be heard, and you know, start a program where everybody feels confident in themselves, and not just the select few that are smarter or more athletic, or classically musically talented, or anything like that. I think everybody to a [under the right] circumstance[s] is talented, and that needs to be nourished.

Sawicki (1991) chose the bottom-up analysis of Foucault rather than the top-down analysis of Marx to describe how resistance to domination and oppression creates a space for involvement of people in relations through which they can re-write history from different perspectives. According to Sawicki, a politics of difference became a source of action and change by disrupting and challenging our assumptions about others. Young participants rethought how music education and school in general could work best for young people through their ongoing engagement in reading, writing, jamming, performing, and recording music of diverse styles. A more thorough examination of some of the barriers to developing their ideas, practices, and actions to their fullest in school emerged throughout these processes.

Halia felt that young people were greatly misunderstood by adults in the community. Getting noticed and being heard in school meant informing adults about the different ways in

which young people were learning in the world today. In her final interview toward the end of the year of data collection, Halia shared her insights into how young people learn as part of their use of technology, which she believed needed to be understood by more adults. She expressed that students had become open-minded to new ideas through the Internet. Halia felt this open-mindedness needed to be understood in school by disrupting the perceptions of adults in school toward young people:

Halia: I think just in general, like across the board like, from every level of like music and the arts, that people really need to like realize that since like the internet is like so popular, and like people carry it around on like phones now. Like I have Facebook and Tumblr and Safari and everything like right there all the time.

Miss L: Um hm.

Halia: It's like the world has been so connected that everything's kind of fair game now.

Miss L: Um hm?

Halia: Yeah. But everything's fair game now. So like, nothing's weird to kids anymore. Nothing's like, "Oh that's crazy, like. It's out of bounds, so like as we grow up, that's the way the world's gonna change I think.

Miss L: So, less narrow minded.

Halia: Yeah. Everyone just needs to realize that the new generation is just like extremely open minded.

Miss L: Wide open.

Halia: Yeah. Like wide-open like an open door. And if people aren't like accepting of that, and try to like shape them and mold them with that, everyone's gonna like go crazy. 'Cause it's already happening, like [pause] already!

Miss L: But I think you guys are pushing back against that, and changing it.

Halia: Um hm. I think so.

Miss L: Remember, this [Club] is being supported [I needed to remind Halia that the Club had gone through a rigorous ethical review by themselves, their parents, the school board and university, so as to encourage her to see how all involved are supportive of finding new ways to enhance the experiences of young people in school.]. So, it's a [I pause trying to find the words.]

Halia: [Picking up on what I'm trying to say] It's a slow process. It can't just like, be like, "Let's do it," 'cause rioting doesn't work.

Steering the conversation back towards what Halia voiced earlier in terms of the barriers towards recognizing the "open mindedness" of young people, I circled back a bit in the conversation:

Miss L: So what are the obstacles to developing this open-mindedness?

Halia: I think that people need ta' like take the vast like openness that people have now and just like figure out a way to use it constructively and like focus it more. 'Cause it's like people are so like, they want equality and they want this and want this and want this, but they're not willing to like calmly go about it, so like people need to be open to listening to them and helping shape their ideas, definitely.

Miss L: In schools?

Halia: Yeah. In schools.

Miss L: Like adults?

Halia: Um hm.

I was taken back to the moment of struggle as the students pointed out to me in the most painful of ways why it was so important to hear from the Celtic death metal band in the rock show. I remembered my wanting to exclude this band from the show until the members of the Club were able to make me understand why this was unwise and exclusionary. How could other adults in the school be open to new ideas and how could I expect them to be open when I had such a difficult time during that audition? I reminded her of that day when I was at a loss as to what to do regarding the metal band and how difficult it was *even for me* to maintain an openness towards this genre. How could these young people get their message across to other adults? Halia no doubt sensed my concern surrounding this issue and its inherent complexities when trying to work with adults and others to apply certain principles into larger institutional realities. She addressed this very realistic concern in her next remark:

Halia: It's about calmly explaining things, and youth today is like really bad at doing that.

Miss L: Right, because what they do is like [I make stomping motions and sounds. Laughing, we both make yelling impressions and angry faces.], right? So what do adults in charge do?

Halia: Um hm. Get angry. 'Cause like you have someone disrespecting you right in your face.

Talking a bit more with Halia, I asked her if through dialogue with adults, she felt she could shape their ideas, what exactly was happening, or what should happen during this process. She clarified the issue for me:

Halia: I think it's not so much that we need to shape the, like minds of adults. I just think most people don't know the way, like. Teenagers aren't open with people

anymore [Using the word "open" now in a different sense, Halia is talking about the mistrust young people often feel towards adults, many of whom do not seem to have their best interests at heart as she perceives it], like, I tell my Mom everything 'cause that's just the way I was raised like, your Mom is like your confidant, and that's who you go to. But most people are like, "I hate my parents. I hate my teachers. I hate the government. I hate the police. Like, I hate everything! And I'm just, I'm such a rebel. 'Cause that's really cool now. To be rebellious and like have tattoos, and have piercings, and be bad, and do bad things" and like, I may look like this [referring to herself], but I've always been the same. I'm not like the "ra, ra, ra" [type]!

Miss L: But it's like, a lot of young people don't; haven't been able to develop a rapport with adults. They don't have that at home.

Halia: So, the only way that people are gonna be ever open with adults is if they [adults] listen, don't exactly take everything that they [young people] say and just go with it, but like you gotta be open to it.

Once again, Halia mentioned the importance of being open to young people and their ideas. I pondered the words of Halia as an important aspect of youthful self-actualization, particularly "the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, and the like" (Maslow, 1970, p.126). Her statements seemed to indicate the need for the development of open-mindedness towards young people to help enhance their musical expressions in the Song Writer's Club in this case. I continued to discuss with Halia other ways for adults to cultivate this openness with youth, especially for those young people who might not have the same rapport with adults that she has with her mother:

Miss L: But Halia, that's a really excellent insight into school and society and young lives. And I believe you've hit on the key in terms of this listening, and I wonder if music trains that?

Halia: Um hm. I think so. Listening, and not just listening, but hearing and thinking about it and actually caring about what a person has to say.

Miss L: You just brilliantly summarized the whole thing.

Halia: It's the whole Club purpose [in a tone to remind me].

This interaction with Halia was very encouraging and positive. I remembered back to the first interview when she had expressed her frustration in not having a voice in her own schooling:

Halia: There's people who just keep their head down and keep quiet, and do what they need to do, and they don't feel like they should even bother to say anything because there's really no point. Because people just won't take your opinion [seriously], and even if it goes to the point like someone will get to the office with what they have to say, usually they're just shut down and suspended just for bringing up what they need to say. 'Cause kids are kids and people don't let them be kids and they're upset they don't treat them like kids because "you have to show maturedness." They're kids! You're forcing them to come into a building every day and do stuff for six hours that they don't want to do. They're going to be mad at you [We both laugh slightly]. If they say the "f" word, I'm sorry, but that's probably how they talk at home.

Miss L: Right [We both laugh slightly, knowing this is of course, quite true!]. So do you think there's a better system of feedback in class and cooperation, especially with

young people in high school, that might alleviate some of these problems? Of people feeling excluded, etcetera?

Halia: Yeah, like if people had more opportunities to express themselves, then they're definitely able to . . . but they just don't have that right now.

What I found compelling about this young woman was her ability to express, through her participation in the Club, the need for dialogue between adults and young people and the need for more active listening on the part of adults to the ideas of such open-minded young people. This realization was made evident in her final interview, which contrasted greatly with her earlier angry, frustrated remarks. Through musical performance, particularly the rock show, Halia was one of the players in our drama, revealing what Fabian (1990) thought of as the "missing text." What text was this exactly? "Listening, and not just listening, but hearing and thinking about it and actually caring about what a person has to say." These words uttered by Halia during her second interview made audible another paradox in our study which was very revealing of music education and how it had so often been approached within the paradigm of Western music education: *We might listen to the music students are playing and singing, but at times, without truly hearing, thinking, and caring*. The good news is, of course, that Halia traced a nice path for adults to follow in order to avoid a potential deaf state and instead to begin to truly collaborate with young people in school.

Tackling the Beast

It turned out that this nice path traced out by Halia was not to happen automatically. I returned to the uncomfortable feeling I felt in the room as students set the record straight with me at the audition of the Celtic death metal band for the rock show. I imagined their music to have been just rude behavior. I had then wondered if perhaps I should have dismissed these young

people as discipline problems. I had worried that we should not put them on stage as an example for others to follow. I worried about what other students, parents, teachers, administrators would think. Is overturning the recommendation of the teacher the goal? Because if so, there will not be much support for such a program, set of ideas, beliefs, principles, and so on, especially, in a post-industrial region such as Sydney which was steeped in traditional, conservative, White, eurocentrism. "Such behavior is *not* proper, and it is as simple as that," said the maestro in that context.

It was the maestro still within me who was struggling to maintain an open mind as she entered the final interviews to see what students felt to be the barriers to collaboration with adults in school. What I found out was truly fascinating. The students seemed to have already sorted out many of the issues and challenges themselves. Many of my fears of the discomfort and loss of control over the Club and its members were unfounded. When students exited the interviews many told me that, "Oh, I already said this in the other interview" and/or "I already said that in the other interview." (As a reminder, please note that the students had participated in two interviews with me and two with one another. Only those interviews with me were included in the analysis for this dissertation.)

It would seem that many secrets had been revealed. By contrast, during the first set of interviews, students were guarded coming out of their interviews with one another and into the interviews with me. The incident involving our Celtic death metal band may very well have cleared space to allow for more individual musical expression to occur in the Club. My listening to their opinions had influenced their trust in me and their understanding of some of the complexities around teaching and learning in the classroom today. The discomfort of the incident and *my* discomfort in particular seemed to mark a seminal moment in the collaboration

between us as we worked to find the balance between structure and agency when working to create change. Making myself vulnerable by revealing to the students that I did not have all the answers was a crucial part to the development of our collaboration. The maestro temporarily vanished and was replaced with a skilled collaborator who was interrogating roles.

MacKenzie Applebottoms had stormed out of the room after the audition when we were trying to discuss what to do. She alienated the others from the Club who felt that was no way to properly diffuse the situation. They spoke with her, and she was pleasant and able to clarify her feelings when interviewed later. Added to this was that many of the students had decided there was a right and a wrong way to go about things, which emerged in my interview with Halia as already outlined. Yet, I was still unsettled by the interpretation of authority in the Club, and in school in general. What did the students really have to say about the beast; that being, authority in education? Was it really possible to include everyone? How could we interpret inclusive music education in a way that opened up our classrooms to more diverse expressions of self and other? The following excerpt was from the first interview with Irlen. Interestingly enough, Irlen seemed to describe quite well some of the complexities around teaching and learning in the classroom in an increasingly pluralistic society:

Miss L: Um, so do you feel you are being heard in the Club? In other music classes? In school in general?

Irlen: The Club, definitely.

Miss L: Yes?

Irlen: I definitely think, uh, everybody has their voice in the Club. Um, as for music classes, yeah. [Irlen is a student in the general music program.] I would say again, people have their own voices and it's pretty . . . I don't want to say free-spirited

but it's um . . . you're independent in music class. Like that's . . . that's what I like about it, and I think that's what a lot of people like about it. Being able to cover their own songs or write their own songs and um . . . in other classes, maybe not so much. Um, I think that uh, other people are not quite as open minded to hearing other people's ideas. I mean like it seems as though everybody thinks it's cut and dry [when it comes to] teaching a class. Um, it's really not. It's so dynamic. It's um, like some people learn better in other ways, and um . . . what am I trying to say [laughing slightly]?

When I asked him during this same interview about exclusion and inclusion, he continued in a similar vein:

Miss L: [Are there] some voices that are never heard?

Irlen: Um hm.Um, I dunno . . . it seems kind of futile to express your opinion in a classroom because it's not gonna change anything. I mean people have been trying to do that for a long time in classes. Like, make things different and uh, more suited . . . um . . .

Miss L: What's the barrier?

Irlen: The barrier I would say is probably that, um . . . [looking to me to help him out with the words]

Miss L: Is it the adults in charge?

Irlen: Yeah . . .

Miss L: [Laughing, to give Irlen the OK. I am also implicated in these practices of inclusion/exclusion in the school as a teacher, but am interested in change so I need to hear all the different perspectives on the matter.] You can say it!

Irlen: Yeah. It's definitely that because I mean . . . it's authority. And they can say and do whatever they really want because they have the authority to. The other barrier I would say is that there are usually a lot of people in a classroom. They do, like, have to generalize it. They can't like spend days on end teaching one student this one thing that they shoulda been done a long time ago.

I thought it was interesting how Irlen had developed an ability to see both sides of the issue. However, when I asked him about what was needing to change in school, his response was one of futility:

Irlen: Um, I would say because I believe that a lot of people think like me. There's not a lot of, really a lot of point in trying to change anything, because things; things in schools have been running the same way for a really long time. Um, you go in, you sit down, you learn, and you leave.

I thought to myself, "Oh my. Perhaps this is a futile endeavor." Not giving up, however, in my usual tenacious style, I ask the question again in a different way:

Miss L: We're trying to figure out why is it that people aren't speaking out, though. Um, you know, when they have opinions [I hoped that by including myself by using more inclusive language, that Irlen would trust me and tell me the truth about the problem].

Irlen: I think it's because in order for a student to change anything they have to convince an authority figure, and the . . . the thing that would definitely help is, like help the students is like if these people would give up a bit of authority. But there's no way they're gonna do that.

When I asked Irlen to look at things a little more pragmatically; that is, in terms of the simplicity of everyday things in class, his response was very different. I realized that changing the world of public education is a huge task, so I thought it might be a good idea to point out how we could take it one small step at a time:

> Miss L: Right. Well maybe not for [monumental] change purposes, but um . . . to input into what's actually happening. Like, what's preventing people from voicing opinions? Just regular opinions? Or ideas?
>
> Irlen: That is probably a fault of the students themselves. Because I know I'm afraid to say anything in class just because I'm pretty anxious about people.

My aim here was to plant a seed for Irlen to get involved in school and try to work past the barriers. At the same time, I did realize there was much work to be done on the adult front in the school, which I believed started and continued with my own process of critical self-examination.

After the rock show, the tone of the interview with Irlen was very different. In this interaction, Irlen is more aware of the ambiguity around authority in schooling and can articulate it very clearly:

> Miss L: OK. So, what are the obstacles, to for instance um, the improvement of student engagement in music-making? What sort of obstacles are there in music class or in school in general?
>
> Irlen: Um, obstacles. I'd say [laughing slightly], the teenage punk in me wants to say that uh, authority figures like, the principals, I guess. They're uh, a little bit afraid of an uprising. Because musicians seem to be pretty opinionated. I think that's one of the obstacles. Uh, I feel like they try and stifle music because uh [can't seem to find the words].

Miss L: It's so powerful.

Irlen: Um hm [emphatically]. Exactly! Powerful.

Miss L: And what happens as a result of that? Does the music stop?

Irlen: No! It doesn't. It just makes them more angry.

Miss L: Changes arenas?

Irlen: Yeah, it ends up with people like me saying that uh, authority figures are afraid of us [Both of us laugh slightly]. That's what happens.

Miss L: Right. Right. Jeez that's great. OK, so you've hit on a really interesting thing. That whole idea of authority in schools. It prevents dialogue.

Irlen: Um hm. Yeah, exactly. 'Cause it's; it's people saying these are the rules. We don't have to listen to you 'cause we make the rules." Like that's what authority is.

Miss L: And there's no voice. You have no voice.

Irlen: No. But the other thing is, as much as that is an issue for some people, um, I realize why that system is in place because there are some people who could not exist in this environment without rules 'cause they just don't know how.

Miss L: Yeah?

Irlen: Like I understand like, it's a . . . it's a stalemate because um, we want, like the people that want change can't have it 'cause there's other people that ruin it, like. And they have to keep things in line. They can't just let people do whatever they want. But uh [Irlen stops for a moment].

Miss L: There has to be a balance, doesn't there?

Irlen: There has to be a balance, yeah.

Miss L: Perhaps a balance between having a structure, um, but allowing people to voice their opinions?

Irlen: Um hm, yeah. It has to be a mutual respect. 'Cause I don't think that . . . I think authority is demanding authority. It's not authority by result of respect. And I think that's how it should be. It should be um, we listen to them because we want to, because they keep things in line, and not force us.

Irlen had articulated the very difficult, ambiguous complexity about authority in schools that was seen by many of the other students as a barrier to their learning and process of self-actualization. Through music-making processes and practices, the students made audible those obstacles to their learning engagement in school. In this regard, authority really seemed to take the center stage. Other students articulated similar ideas surrounding the problematic nature of authority in school in different ways:

Jake: Ah, I'd say that a lot of students have a large fear of what their peers will think, but also of what teachers might think. Though that's not necessarily . . . the art courses like music, art, and drama are a lot more open.

Miss L: Right, right . . .

Jake: But when it comes to the other ones, there's a lot of teachers who are a tad . . . ah . . . they seem to have an emperor mentality towards people. Some teachers. Not necessarily in the arts, but with the other ones. So that might kind of be instilled into their brains from earlier grades as well.

The student interpretation of authority in school as an "emperor mentality" served as another main theme for our fugal analysis (see Figure 17). Despite what Jake had stated, other students believed the emperor mentality could extend to the arts and have a negative affect on their

engagement. One student, Mary Ruth (grade ten), has participated in music classes from as early on as elementary school and had a different opinion of music class specifically:

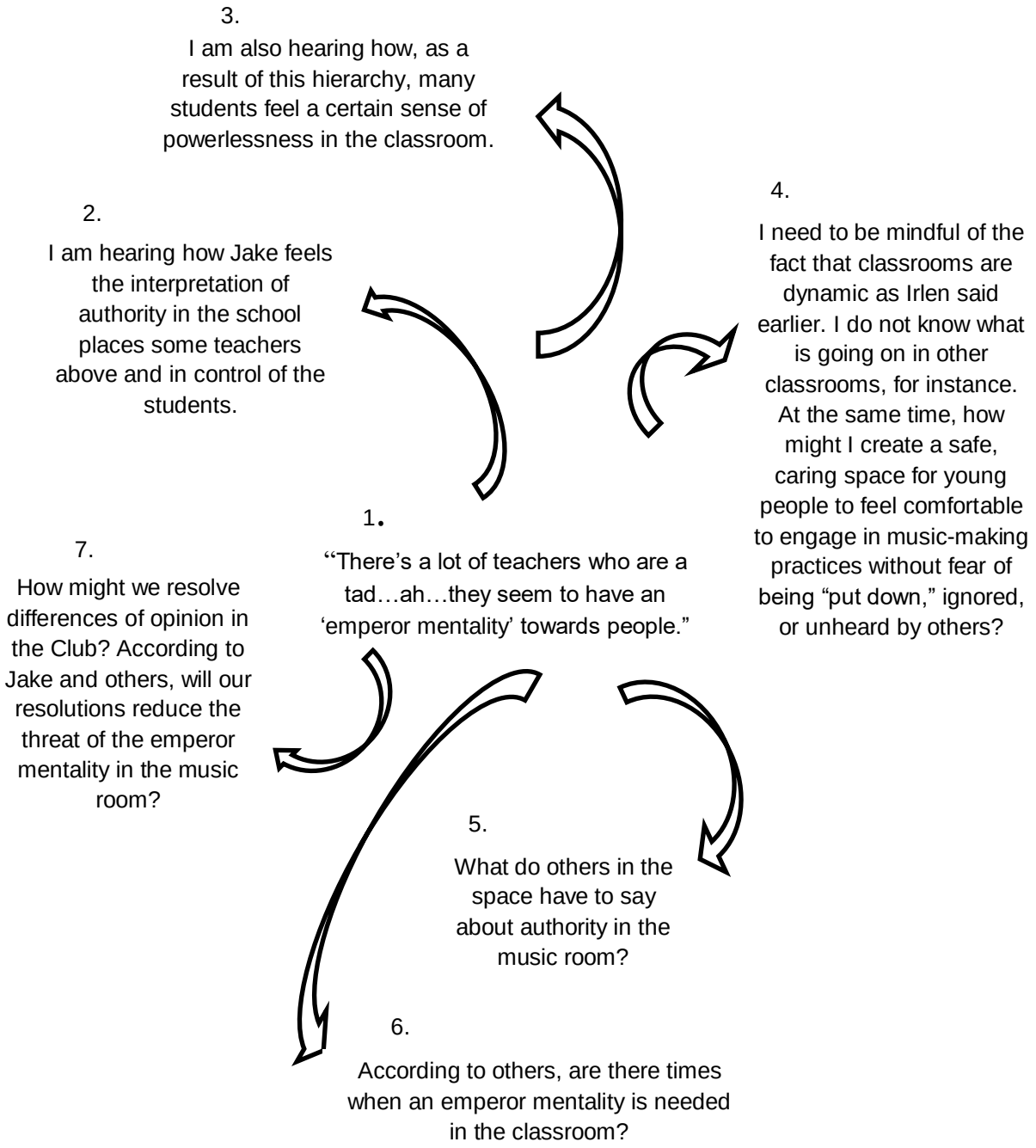

Figure 20. Fugal analysis of the members of the Club concerning the correct use of authority in school. Questioning the emperor mentality often embraced by educators to find new methods of teaching and learning based in sharing power.

Mary Ruth: Um, I feel like in music classes, um, are kind of different from regular classes. Because in music classes it's more about talent than in other classes. It's about everyone giving the answer [in other classes]. In the other classes, everyone has to give an answer I guess you could say. But in music class, um, everyone has talent, but it's different and more people are vocal about their talents, so in those classes I find teachers more have 'picks' about who should be out there and who should be doing what. And so everyone else, even if they have talent, it's not being put out as more, because, maybe they're not as vocal about it.

Another student, Gandhi, had suggestions as to how to assist some students to become empowered to develop their musical potentials by simply giving more opportunities to those who might not seem to have as much ability as others:

Gandhi: I feel like in order for everyone to be able to grow and stuff like that, maybe 'cause I'd say that if there's a weak person and a strong person, maybe um, instead of always giving the strong person like a lead part, or something like that, we like switched up and give someone . . . Maybe someone who obviously isn't good enough to have the lead part. But like, if they're; if someone who isn't always good enough is always like on the bottom in the background, they're not really going to be learning much either. And the same person who is good enough to be lead. If he's always there like, then that person's not really gonna learn much either.

According to Mary Ruth and Gandhi, the authority of the music teacher could be problematic for students who needed the encouragement to grow and develop in the classroom.

If the teacher made distinctions between those with or without talent, many opportunities for students to engage in music-making could be restricted as Gaztambide-Fernández (2013a) has shown.

We discussed the notion of talent in the Club meetings, but I had the sense that there were barriers to student expression about ways to change our practices to become more inclusive in our musical performances. While we tried to wade through the interpretation of authority in school, its effect on collaboration between teacher and student, and on the processes of the Song Writer's Club in particular, one student clarified what he believed to be the reason why students had such a difficult time expressing themselves in school:

Miss L: What are the obstacles to improvement of student engagement in music-making, like in general? In music class? In school in general? Why are there not more open processes and dialogues? What are the complexities around this?

Ernold: Um, I feel like it's because at such an early age, like at school, that we're told to almost follow set guidelines, and not question authority and not do things like that.

Miss L: Um hm.

Ernold: So I feel like we're kind of raised that way, and at this point in our lives we're like following that, even subconsciously. So we try not to give negative feedback or to give critical feedback.

Miss L: Right.

Ernold: So I feel that's, um, that's something that, um, the group I think really challenges. And I think that's really good. And I think that should be challenged in other parts of the school.

Instances where authority characterized by the emperor mentality led to the unfair treatment of young people in school and society, critical thinking such as this would be necessary to help students become empowered to speak back against injustice in order to self-actualize. Our collaborative efforts in the Club were an important part of this process for some of the students as they indicated in their interviews.

Chasing Away the Wolf in Sheep's Clothing Through Song

A nagging feeling persisted for me. How could we truly develop critical thinking, empowerment, and self-actualization at Sydney Academy—a traditional school in a former steel city in Eastern Canada? Was it realistic to work to attain our goal for everyone to have a voice in the running of the Club? Could we deploy the arts in such an ethical project given the nature of public school, and the curricula? Remembering back to political naïveté spoken about by Fabian (1990), our performances might have little to no effect in terms of changing practice if perceived by those in power as "entertainment and as a way of channeling or co-opting social protest" (p. 17). I was largely concerned that our ideas of dialogue and forming trusting relations within a collaborative model of musical performance might just become another cloak for the continuance of the same injustices after we let these kids have their say:

> In the case of the rhetoric of effects, the concept of the arts has been mobilized always within the context of projects of betterment, in which what counts as the arts is always construed as inherently good and worthy, and as having the moral standing to civilize (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013b, p. 224).

I needed to be mindful of those moments in which I might in fact be re-colonizing the students through the arts, albeit inadvertently. Inclusion in our definition within the Club was one of deeper engagement of young people in the process of their learning (Dunleavy & Cooke,

2012; Smyth, 2007). Their involvement could very well break some of the colonial logics underlying our interpretations of authority in school by challenging the role of the teacher. I thought back to an incident which occurred in my choir class during the year of data collection, an occurrence that demonstrated how students could become more involved in their learning through my relinquishing or lessening of my the authority as the teacher in the classroom.

In the fall of 2013, the choir was listening to a traditional piece of First Nations drumming and singing. One of the students from Membertou raised his hand and told me he knew some more up-to-date music that brought together traditional drumming with pop influences. Intrigued, I asked him if he could play a track for us. He brought out his iPhone, and plugged it into our speaker. The track played was by a group called A Tribe Called Red, and the song was named, "Electric Pow Wow Drum." I was fascinated by the track. As soon as the track began, a number of the students also from Membertou began to move around and make loud, calling noises. They received sharp head turns, and disapproving looks from many of the other students in the choir. The students sat up straight, and immediately stopped making noise. All the students sat quietly until the song finished.

When the song was over, I gently explained to the choir that in many world cultures, music is not necessarily something to which one sits and listens quietly. It is for celebration, dancing, enjoyment, and is experienced in many different ways. Often music is tied to religious ceremonies for instance, in which people participate in ways to which many others might not be accustomed. In this light, the students who were calling out during the pow wow song, were most likely experiencing the music as it was originally intended. I asked the students from Membertou if I had it right. They nodded their heads. "Yeah, Miss. Pretty good." One student in particular asked if he could add a few things. "Of course," I responded. "Yeah, Miss. I'm a

Pow Wow dancer, and normally I dance like this." He proceeded to show the group the movements he made to go with the music, followed by a long explanation of the dress, vocal sounds, the movements, and trends in Pow Wow music and dance in North America. What a lesson we had that day! Allowing this student to take over the lesson enhanced his involvement in the class and helped engage his peers in the classroom.

Through music and listening, whether in the Club or in my own classroom, I heard how students had the ability to, as bell hooks (1994) stated, become "acutely aware of each other" (p. 186). Their direct involvement in song writing and music-making in general, if sensitively guided, could bring about greater awareness and inclusion within the classroom. This was not to say that direct involvement in music and the arts automatically chased away the beast and created acute awareness among students. We had to do something to make this happen. I thought back to my own career teaching music, and how I had stepped away from my role as purely a band director to include studio producer, sound designer, and at times manager and mentor. In these roles, I learned to value the insights and ideas of the students differently from within my purely maestro self.

Gaztambide-Fernández (2013b) described the cultural production approach to the teaching and learning of arts as focused upon "what kinds of relationships evolve within the context of symbolic exchanges involving creative work" (p. 229). The discomforts I felt in collaboration with students to include more students in music class and in the Song Writer's Club was based on my relating differently with the students. Why did this make me uncomfortable? I believe that the time I spent questioning my maestro role and looking at ways to mentor young people differently was necessary groundwork for collaborating with students in my music classes as well as in the Song Writer's Club. Lightening spoke of herself as directly

involved in the teaching and learning process. From this position she was able to talk about ways to change the Club:

Lightening: Um, well I think maybe like, it may be a good idea, but in a way it might not be, but I mean, maybe kinda like somebody who's not engaged in music at all. If they maybe like, say the club wasn't as big and there was somebody who wanted to get into, like, get in but they don't know anything about music. They only listen to it, like, maybe they don't play an instrument or maybe they can sing but they don't really sing that much. Or if they're kind of wanting to get into the technical stuff, like, maybe we can like teach them and get them engaged, too?

Lightening also articulated the idea to expand the Club idea to reach more young people in the area:

Miss L: How do we show part of this process to others in the school and greater community?

Lightening: Um, encourage more people to join. Or make more groups, like.

Miss L: Should there be more of these in schools?

Lightening: Yeah. Definitely, like instead of just having, or even like community-wide. There could be, like, um, Ashby song writing Club, or like, the Sydney whatever, right?

Miss L: Yes!

Lightening: We can meet more people and learn their own song writing techniques. That would be a good way to get people used to speaking out as well.

In light of events such as the one involving the choir and the words of Lightening in the passage above, there was an obvious need for a reinterpretation of authority in school and an

opening of our minds to the views of young people through listening as voiced by Halia and Irlen. The collaboration between teacher and student that occurred in the Song Writer's Club produced spaces of direct involvement with, for, and by the students in their music-making, such that their ideas and unique expressions were valued.

Musical Resistance

Working to form collaborative relationships between teacher and students in ways which might bring about greater inclusiveness often meant tackling the beast of White, dominant, male, eurocentricity permeating public institutions, our school, and our Club as the time arrived. Reflecting back on the year of data collection, I would have to say that resistance came quite naturally to certain members of the group. At times, getting noticed did not mean singing, and looking like everyone else. It meant turning heads while being true to oneself, including while engaged in music-making. The earlier incidents involving the Club insights into the WGBG's and the inclusiveness of the rock show were testimony to that. In the interviews, a few of the students spoke about resisting dominant norms to bring about a more inclusive engagement in music-making.

One student in particular, Magdalen, had a definite stance to the issue of difference and resisting dominant norms through music in a unique genre of music she was working with:

> Magdalen: I write pagan folk art which is music based on Wicca, and nature and self, but as a dark person I give it a dark twist, kind of gory-like. So, that's how I basically write my lyrics, 'cause as a horror fanatic, and as a Wiccan, it kind of just mashes, you know . . . and it's not clashy. It sounds delicate almost.

Magdalen resisted the stereotypes of women as being delicate, fragile beings by creating music and art that often arrests the senses with its gruesomeness. Openly a feminist within the school

itself, Magdalen was often seen talking with the administration about matters pertaining to International Women's Day, as well as any and/or all matters pertaining the treatment of women within school and society.

Sawicki (1991) regarded resistance to traditional sexual practices and gender roles as a means of opening up the minds of people within more dominant cultures to develop more diverse understandings of self and other: "This means discovering new ways of understanding ourselves and each other, refusing to accept the dominant cultures' characterizations of our desires, and redefining them from within resistant cultures" (pp. 43-44). The resistance of Magdalen to the dominant stereotype of women carried over into her music and vice verse. The example she set produced a following of individuals in the school who became less afraid of showing who they were. I watched as Magdalen gained friends and admirers who seemed to look up to her for her fearlessness in being herself at all times. The images she created through her music overturned stereotypes of the weak delicate female, and replaced it with the idea of a female who is vulnerable, but fierce at the same time.

Another student, Gandhi, had strong views about resisting stereotypes, especially those involving gender, which came up during the interviews:

Gandhi: Like the whole labeling thing. I've always been really against that. Even like . . . even going down to like, um, like . . . smart, fat—all that stuff. Like even to me, it's like gender roles, like if you're a guy; you're a girl, like [pauses].

Miss L: Um hm?

Gandhi: I'm not going to judge you any differently because you're a girl, or 'cause you're a guy, like . . . Gender is just like your reproduction, like make babies, that's what it is, it's like . . . I feel like . . . [can't seem to find the words]

Miss L: It's totally irrelevant?

Gandhi: I feel like nothing, like . . . nothing at all. Like your gender should not affect anything at all like at all. Like not how people treat you, how people, uh, like this is a girl. That's girl stuff. Like I hate that so much.

Gandhi felt that such stereotypes prevented people from coming together and working as a group as he expressed to me:

Gandhi: Um, but like I feel like if we want to work together and like collectively, this thing we actually need to be focusing, because one individual like, people like . . . one person can't change the world. Maybe some people say that one person can change the world. But I believe that really if you want to get anything done, you have to work collectively.

Although Gandhi was vague about what exactly he wanted to work on, I fit his words into the overall Club theme as Halia had expressed it earlier, which had to do with more inclusive, youth-attuned music-making for the growth and self-actualization of young people. When I asked Gandhi what was preventing the formation of the collectivity and the raising of the consciousness of students, Gandhi stated that there were so many people who "dress the same," and that there were "more of them [than us]."

The latter part of this conversation reminded me of an earlier interview with Joe, who said there were a lot of cliques in the school. Echoing this sentiment, "Yelling in the Color Yellow" recorded a song in the studio which both depicted and spoke back against the pressures students were feeling from these cliques within the school (see Figure 18):

[Intro with breakdown]

Verse 1: Arrived this morning, jet lag high
Couldn't sleep, should've slept when we were in the sky, yeah [break]
People speak, people groan, I'm a freak, she's a crone

	People say I won't know when to stay, what to show [break]
Chorus:	I've gotta get away from this
	I've gotta clear my head
	If I don't get away from this
	I'm gonna end up dead [break]
Verse 2:	Racists everywhere, everyone is in despair
	It's more than just a scare, life really isn't fair [break]
	People cry, people know price is high, morale is low
	People talk nearing me, people start to stare at me [break]
Chorus:	I've gotta get away from this
	I've gotta clear my head
	If I don't get away from this
	I'm gonna end up dead
Verse 3:	White, black, gay, straight, everyone, it's too late
	Go back to your groups before someone calls the troops [break]
	Segregation, intonation, self-fed abomination
	There's no doubt you're gonna die alone [break]
Chorus:	I've gotta get away from this
	I've gotta clear my head
	If I don't get away from this
	I'm gonna end up dead [break]

Figure 18. Song written by one of the Club bands illustrating the effect of school cliques on student lives. Theme of needing to escape from the pressure felt by young people who feel excluded from certain social groups in school.

Joe felt the cliques in school were a barrier to "getting noticed" and "being heard":

Joe: And then in those groups there's like different; even smaller groups that just . . . a couple of friends like uh, the circle of friends that don't really talk to anybody else.

Miss L: Are there a lot of outsiders?

Joe: Yeah. Like anybody can feel like an outsider. Well like. There's times when like you don't know where your friends are. Like with me, I have a lot of really good friends, but they're um, like it's hard to find them sometimes, like they'll; they'll

be uh, I dunno . . . Bartholomew is one of my good friends. He'll be in band or something, so I don't know where he is.

In his interview, Joe made a direct link between being heard by peers and engaging in school life. He expressed how music-making processes could serve as a means of breaking through the barriers of the cliques to become more fully engaged in school life:

Miss L: Like why are students disengaging?

Joe: Um, I feel it could be like they're not getting heard. But, the thing is, if you make a song that's really good and a lot of people hear it, they're gonna like; for some reason they look up to you. But before they hear that, they treat you like dirt. At least that's my experience. It's kinda weird . . . like once they hear something; that you can actually do something, like, they'll actually talk to you. Until they hear you do something that's good, um, or until they see you do something that's amazing, they won't talk to you . . . Like half the people that talk to me now probably wouldn't talk to me if I didn't do that; if I didn't make music.

The students were using their music to get noticed by their peers and show people who they truly were. Putting themselves out there initially was often a courageous act due to the risks of being put down by their peers. However, what I admired most about this group was how they often supported one another throughout their music-making processes. Smyth (2011) stated that the formation of trust is key to school inclusion (p. 68). Similarly, Gaztambide-Fernández (2012, 2013a, 21013b) detailed the growth in relationships that is necessary and that often comes with the making of art as cultural production. As such, I was interested to hear how and/or if the Club was assisting these young people to form trusting relationships to bring about a more inclusive participation in music-making from their own perspectives. Students jammed, performed, and

often recorded songs depicting challenges in their daily lives. Sharing these songs with one another during these activities demonstrated how the Club was working together to establish this sense of trust. For example, the song "Done with you" by Yelling in the Color Yellow described a relationship break-up of one of the group members that made quite an impression on her (see Figure 19).

The students had already discussed how inclusion meant their deep involvement in the teaching and learning processes in the Club and school in general. Overcoming obstacles such as the stereotypes and cliques in an atmosphere of trust was a key aspect of becoming empowered to continue their processes of self-actualization. By my listening attentively and supporting their growth, *my* practice became *our* p ractices as we shared responsibilities in the Club. During the second semester of the year, one of the students told me while we were putting away studio gear, that "The best thing about this Club is it's not *your* Club. It's *our* Club!" I realized at that moment we had accomplished a great feat as the students began to feel a sense of ownership over their work.

[Intro]

Verse 1:	I remember everything you did that night,
	All of the things you said to her,
	It's like I wasn't even standing there,
	Do you know how much it hurts?
Bridge:	To think that you were the one for me,
	To think that we were forever to be,
	If only it, wasn't so easy,
Chorus:	Always being by your side,
	Believ'in you were only mine,
	Really thought you were the one,
	But you were using me for your own fun,
	Now I'm done [3 times], with you. [break]
Verse 2:	Do you remember all the times you made me smile?
	It wasn't so hard, can't you see?

Whenever I would be right there with you,
It's like we were meant to be,

Bridge: But now you've drifted too far away,
And I am done play'in your games,
If only it wasn't so easy,

Chorus: Always being by your side,
Believ'in you were only mine,
Really thought you were the one,
But you were using me for your own fun,
Now I'm done [3 times], with you.

[breakdown]

Chorus: Always being by your side,
Believ'in you were only mine,
Really thought you were the one,
But you were using me for your own fun,
Now I'm done [3 times], with you.

Figure 19. Song written by a Club band describing hurt from a past relationship. Environment of trust brought about within the Club allowing for the expression of personal experiences of students in their music making.

.**Bartholomew's Balance: Bottom-up and Top-down Ideas for Inclusion**

Resisting stereotypes and cliques positioned some of the students to become more aware of structural issues which needed to be addressed in order to continue their ideas about inclusive music-making emerging from their work in the Song Writer's Club. Smith (1987, 1990, 2002, 2006a, 2006b) and Diamond (2006) used both bottom-up and top-down analysis in their institutional ethnographic methodology and methods to connect everyday experiences with *extra-local ruling relations*. I encouraged the students to go beyond the obstacles to their music-making encapsulated in their stories and experiences in school music programs to engage in a more critical analysis of institutional relations that hindered and/or enhanced inclusive engagements in the Club, in music class, and/or in school in general.

Bartholomew, who had described himself as a rock musician, spoke of the imbalance between the emphasis on (eurocentric) classical music in school music, as opposed to more

contemporary (rock) music. He suggested the music-making processes of the Club were a good start to creating a change in the perceptions of people towards contemporary musicians and their genres:

Bartholomew: A lot of times, it's [music education] . . . well not all of it [is] actually classical per say, but a lot of it is sort of classical. More classically based than pop music. OK, classical music is your history. Pop music is your sociology. Get what I'm saying?

Miss L: [Laughing] Love it!

Bartholomew: That's kind of a weird statement, but I'll put it out there anyway.

Miss L: So, why is this balance not happening? Why is it one or the other in schools?

Bartholomew: It's kind of a good question. But if I had to guess, I would say a fair bit of it is stereotyping, basically. Mostly on the part of the people making the decisions obviously. It's sort of like, um, the ensemble is the sort of classic intellectual thing and the rock/pop music is like a bunch of idiots ingesting cocaine. So, I mean it's an exaggeration, but do you see what I'm saying? Like there's a certain stereotype there where the classical music is sort of the intellectual "healthy" music, whereas a lot of the more contemporary sounds are just kind of, I don't know, for fun or something. And I mean, obviously they are, but, the classical intellectual music is for fun, too.

Miss L: Well can't classical music be fun? Or cannot these band students be cocaine addicts as well?

Bartholomew: Well, that's the thing. I'm sure there are plenty of classical musicians who have their fair share of unhealthy lifestyles [I laugh out loud]. And classical

music is fun. I mean the whole point of music is entertainment, basically. And sometimes insight as well. But, I mean you don't listen to music so you can work out your accounting. You . . . I mean, maybe you do, but if you do this, then you do it because working out your accounting is really boring and you kinda want some sort of entertainment there.

Miss L: Right [nodding in agreement].

Bartholomew: So, I mean classical music, the whole purpose of classical music is fun. The whole purpose of modern music is enjoyment. It's all the same thing. It's just different ways of doing it and thinking about it. The only problem is that they seem to only approach one particular way.

Miss L: Um hm. The power. So there is a problem with the power?

Bartholomew: [Quickly]. Yeah. I suppose so.

Miss L: Which is really good [that is, his point is a good one]. Well, in the Club, we're trying to run this in sort of a non-hierarchical way, so that you don't have your usual stereotypes, or what have you, seizing power and [exerting] control [over others]. So that it is a more shared operation. But, how can this sort of principle be applied more broadly within a system as you're talking about . . . how do we get this message out there? This breaking of stereotypes [of musicians]? How does that happen?

Bartholomew: Well, that's a good question. But I suppose it's the sort of thing we're doing now is pretty good. Well I don't know really if it's the first step or not, because I don't know exactly how all of this came and formed. But it's a pretty good step . . .

Miss L: And it speaks for itself?

Bartholomew: Yeah. Basically. And I mean obviously this Club would just be the beginning. But it's a pretty good beginning, and I think it's the sort of thing we need to get happening.

I spoke directly to Bartholomew about the issue surrounding the Celtic death metal band. If adults in charge have some say about whose music is played and when, could Club members expect to be taken seriously by adults in charge in the school system through screaming in musical production for example? What were the complexities surrounding an issue such as this? My question sparked a conversation between Bartholomew and me:

Bartholomew: Well, that's the problem. I think and I guess maybe that's the way to get past the obstacle of closed-mindedness. That I suppose the trick is to be almost; you almost have to [pause] you have to have as civil a conversation as possible to the point where it's almost sedate.

I asked Bartholomew how he might envision communication about inclusive music education with the powers at be:

Miss L: So the question is, so what do you have to change in schools? How would you put in place a method of dialogue? How would you do that? How can that happen? Could [it] be [through] very simple things [Miss L]?

Bartholomew: Well, I guess that's the tough part. But . . . I mean one thing, I dunno how this would be structured or even if this in particular would be a good idea. Maybe there is even something [already] like this. But if there is, then the word hasn't been out very well which could be good to remedy. But almost like um, students should have more ability to suggest things to the school board. Like I mean I

> don't think we can realistically hope that the . . . um . . . school board is sort of the dictatorship of the school system.

We spoke a little about the structure of the board and the way it worked. Bartholomew revealed his ideas about how to balance structure and agency through an enhanced understanding of how "extra-local ruling relations" (Diamond, 2006; Smith 1987, 2002, 2006a, 2006b) operated within the structures of the school board as influenced by the local political climate:

> Bartholomew: And I don't think there's really too much you can do to like . . . I shouldn't say there's not much you can do to change that. There's like, that's not . . . it's not going to suddenly flip around completely, or become some sort of um . . . socialist situation. But what it could be is if there's more communication between the students and what the students think is good, and the school board.

He later clarified this by adding:

> Bartholomew: But, I guess the trick is, just for people who are being affected by the school board's decisions, to have better communication with the school board itself, and I don't know how this could be done. But just have open forum for suggestion? Of some sort?

As we spoke, Bartholomew remarked that in dialogue, "once things get on the real cutting edge, the controversy is so great that nothing gets done." To address those artistic expressions that might be of a more sensitive nature, Bartholomew had some advice:

> Bartholomew: The trick is, I guess you want to be like, in any sort of art associated situation, or anything having to do with opinions or expression at all, I guess you kind of . . . you want to be open to everything just if something is really cutting edge, out there possibly. I'd even go so far as to say controversial in some cases.

Um . . . you want to have it there. You just don't want it to be too in your face or unavoidable.

Referring directly to the matter of some of the songs that dealt with some very sensitive issues in the lives of young people, Bartholomew also showed great understanding for the position of the school and school system in dealing with these matters:

Bartholomew: And I guess the other thing is that these people are running, I wouldn't call it a business. I guess a government program [education] is what it would be called.

Miss L: That's right. So a certain face to the public, right?

Bartholomew: So the thing is . . . I suppose they gotta be careful which means a lot of times people in that sort of situation would have a tendency to err on the side of caution, which means they would lean more towards censorship than giving everything a shot, unless they were able to take a really close look.

To put it all into perspective, Bartholomew suggested it might help the adults remember back to when they were young:

Bartholomew: New generations come up with new strange things, and it seem particularly strange to the older generation that came up with their own strange stuff that they got used to.

Bartholomew was a very active member of the Club and used his idea and positive experience in the Club to form a trajectory about inclusive music education with a plan to translate it to the system at large. He demonstrated his understanding of the landscape upon which those musical ruling relations were formed in order to begin to dialogue with adults in charge of programs about the importance of inclusive music education, should the opportunity

arise. This could help him, and other students in the Club, to further their music-making processes in a more inclusive manner in what was a pretty good beginning and "the sort of thing we need to get happening" as Bartholomew stated earlier.

When it came to translating the insights of the Song Writer's Club to the greater public, the students agreed that the musical performances and the website marked a strong beginning, but some individuals wanted other schools to take the message more seriously. In order to do this, they took a structuralist approach, putting forward the idea that the school board should engage with them in serious dialogue about inclusive music-making. In the spring of 2014, two of the original members of the Sydney Academy Song Writer's Club made a presentation to the school board about the music program. They made their presentation in the form of a song they wrote themselves, earlier that week. Their presentation contained an underlying meaning of the importance of an inclusive music education based in creative thinking and individual expression. It had taken us over a year to arrive at what felt like a moment of victory.

Reality check. The phone rang one day during the second semester of the study. It was Ms. Z. (pseudonym) asking questions about something unrelated to the research. Her child was participating in the research, as well as in the music program itself. This young person had a great deal of experience in formal music ensembles over the years, and seemed to have developed an interest in working collaboratively with musicians of different musical styles in the Club. I cannot deny the fact that I felt uncomfortable at times with the idea of mixing musical styles and some of the different social groups that seemed to accompany them. I spent a great deal of energy as the facilitator, translating messages back and forth, until I began to observe the effortless manner in which the students worked across different musical styles. I began to relax a little bit until this day.

I was both enraged and horrified when at the end of the conversation, Ms. Z. added, "I do have an issue with the Song Writer's Club." I gulped, and sat forward in my seat. "Please," I replied, "What particular concern do you have?" The response she gave me caused me to become deadly silent. "Well, how are students expected to write songs without any formal background in melody, harmony, and all of the basic elements of music?" Her tone was one of indignation at the fact that *those* students without formal training were writing, presenting, and recording songs without somehow going back ten years to receive formal music training based in standard notation. The students brought their ideas about music to my dissertation research, and expanded these ideas through dialogue with one another in the Club, which was guided by me, the teacher. What Ms. Z. did not realize at the time, was that it was possible her own child has changed her/his concept about what music is and how it is made, by coming into contact with *those* musicians who may have learned more by ear and by feel than through standard notation. My response was quite simple. I stated, "Well, this is something we will no doubt find out from the research." This seemed to placate her. We chatted a bit longer before hanging up.

The viewpoint of Ms. Z. spoke profoundly to the debates concerning the binaries that are at the heart of issues of social justice in music education in Canada (Bartel, 2004b; Gould, Countryman, Morton, & Rose, 2009). If reading music had been interpreted through one narrow set of processes based in notational literacy, the same students with formal, notational training would continue to be identified for music-making in music education programs just as Seddon (2004) described. Informal music research had already spoken back against placing large, eurocentric ensemble practice at the base of music education programs in favor of more informal-based processes which enhanced the autonomy of students (Green, 2001, 2002, 2005,

2008). These processes would help close the gap between their musical lives in and outside school (Bowman, 2002; Elliott, 2005; Regelski & Gates, 2009).

In my research project, how did the students and I "break free from the chains of all this constructed music," in the words of Effy? I thought back to the many ways in which the students described their experiences writing songs in the Club through which they broke these chains:

Samuel: Everyone gets the chords. Sometimes we do like, different instruments. We'll come out with our own harmonies by ourselves. Like, each instrument. Each instrument player will cover their own harmony, and what goes best with what.

Dave: Well recently we recorded an original, and I remember how it was kinda, like it started off . . . .there was no drums in it originally. It was just an acoustic song. So, when Ché said, you know Ché? He said that we needed drums in it, I said, "OK." So we recorded like a little demo on my cell phone, and I went home and I started like, practicing like drums . . . it was a really quiet song so I had to make it like, "fit."

Miss L: Um hm?

Dave: So I remember when I like finished it, I brought it like, back and I told them and I played it for them, and they said it sounded really good . . . so when we recorded it, I guess it all fit right.

MacKenzie: I wrote down a bunch of random lyrics that I think would be good together in a song if I incorporate them properly. And then, have like a book full of random lines; a little notebook and everything. So I just take all of them and then put them in specific orders and divide them into perfect parts and portions for chorus, and like verse one, and verse two, bridge and everything.

Miss L: Where do these concepts [song ideas] come from?

Joe: Sometimes I just; I'm sitting there, or I'm really tired and have a really good idea, and that'll happen. And sometimes, if I hear a song, it'll like trigger an idea. I won't like copy the song, but it'll like just give me an idea of something to write, or just a different style to experiment with.

Gandhi spoke of the possibilities for self-discovery and growth through music-making practices that had a more creative element:

Gandhi: It [the Club] helped me realize that there isn't necessarily a set way to do things. That I can explore kind of who I am with my music-making. I don't have to rely on, um, what's supposed to be played here because he or she said that, or what's written here. I could throw in "that."

Similarly, the interviews with Halia and Ernold expressed the need for voiced approaches in the music classroom:

Ernold: So, being able to like really play with the music and not just play the music.

Miss L: So do you think if there's a better system of feedback in class [in school, in general] and cooperation, especially with young people in high school, that it might alleviate some of these problems? Of people feeling excluded, etcetera?

Halia: Yeah, like if people had more opportunities to express themselves, then they're definitely able to [feel included] . . .

This is not to say reading and writing standard notation has no place in music education, but the students felt that not enough emphasis was being given to the other side of music-making. In fact, Bartholomew spoke to this very issue:

> Bartholomew: There's a whole other world that I don't think a lot of people making the decisions on these things really give that credit . . . you sort of always think of um, blues musician, say, who doesn't know how to read music. Well, yeah that's not good. You should know how to read music. But I've also met a lot of people who can read music, but can't pick up something by ear. And that's pretty useful knowledge, too . . . So, um, so I find people sort of . . . they put a little too much focus on one aspect of the music, not enough on that other side.

The interviews with these students revealed the importance of examining and developing balanced approaches to teaching and learning music.

In response to the comment about the elements of music made by Ms. Z., these elements themselves are on grounds that are being contested throughout music classrooms in the Western world (Stewart Rose & Countryman, 2013). Stewart Rose and Countryman (2013) examined how students described and interpreted the elements of music in community in ways which expanded the very notions of the elements themselves (p. 59). Each student embodied and interpreted their understanding of music differently through self-other interactions in my dissertation research as they worked to empower themselves to become self-actualized. To assist with this process, music educators need to unsettle the notion of talent, the smart kids, musicians and other labels that prohibit students from developing their unique potentials. Looking at deeper, critical issues involving race, gender, social class, and so on, at the heart of music-making will help bring these young voices to the center of the classroom. Aspects of identity and belonging are intertwined in everything young people do in school, and it is imperative that we address their need to be heard as Tilleczek (2011, 2014) and student participants suggested, "My voice is like my music, and I know I'm getting heard" (Gandhi).

Smyth (2011) provided direction for how to move beyond simple dualisms in teacher-student relationships towards sharing power. He explained that sharing power between teacher and student cannot be an equal relationship. It *is*, however, about "the ethical use of power" (p. 93). I aimed to help students take on a leadership role in the Club to assist them with the expression of their voice and ideas in the Club. Research continues to indicate that young people took action when shut out of formal decision making processes. Furlong and Cartmel (2012) outlined the political engagement of young people in England during the 2009-2010 election campaigns aimed at addressing their concerns. Structural problems were found within the British political system that denied youth a voice in their own political affairs. At best, they were treated as political apprentices rather than political agents of change (p. 26). As a result, young people sought other alternative ways of making their voices heard.

As an analogy to the situation with the young people in England and their loss of voice within formal political structures, what I was hearing from these young people gave me a sense of hope. I heard evidence of personal growth and willingness to get involved, tackle the beast, and create change:

> Miss L: Like do people have ideas, but they won't say them in class? Because they're scared of what their friends think?
>
> Lightening: Yeah. I think. I think it um, there is probably lots of people who have something they wanna say, and it's just they're so used to being in classrooms where they can't like, even if they do say something, like, they're not going to do anything about it. Like, so now, even in the Club, it might be kind of helping them I guess more, to get out and say that stuff. Like I know I never used to like say what's on my mind. And if I had like ideas and stuff, it would be more just like,

"Oh well, it's not gonna . . . they're not gonna do it anyway. I may as well not say it." But now, since the Club, it's like I can say this, and people will think about it and discuss it and stuff.

Summary: Changing our Approaches and Processes in Music Education.

Gandhi: Well, how the whole system on how we learn things, I think is kind of narrow-minded. We should just have a completely different system on how people learn. Like I can't really think of that, but kinda how music works. It's like this is . . . you kind of have a task, and it's kind of up to us to solve it, I guess. But in math you can't do that. But we need to maybe find a way so that people could put more of themselves in their work.

This chapter has revealed many student insights, perceptions, and ideas about how to bring about more inclusive practices in music education to help empower young people towards self-actualization. Stereotypes and cliques within school acted as barriers to their ability to be heard in school, but the greatest obstacle seemed to be the interpretation of authority by adults. In particular, Halia spoke of the need for adults to be more open-minded towards young people and their ideas. Jake strengthened this idea by identifying a particularly problematic issue for students in the emperor mentality espoused and enacted by some of the adults in school. Students such as Magdalen, Halia, and Irlen resisted the single-minded notions of talent (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013a) embedded in formal music education practices by developing their own musical styles that they shared with others in the Club. These resistances were necessary for them to maintain their sense of self. In the end, student participants described a real need for more creative approaches in music education to balance the more rational, positivistic approaches that had been the norm. Bartholomew suggested balancing structure and

agency by both understanding the particular landscape of the school system and by speaking or singing to the adult members of that landscape in ways they could understand. For instance, he suggested that students could speak and sing about the importance of supporting ideas and principles that came to be embodied by the Song Writer's Club.

Karlsen and Väkevä (2012) also believed the informal learning model of music education was in need of close re-examination. As part of their trajectory in music education research, they similarly theorize informal music education through the work of pragmatist John Dewey such that Karlsen and Väkevä believe that music educators need to abandon fixed practices in music education towards an understanding of music as socially situated. In their view, music education is to be understood as a "constantly evolving cultural field" (p. xvii). Who is to be part of this musical cultural evolution? How is this evolution accomplished? It is at this point of intersection that the work of critical social theorists is absolutely necessary. A child or young person who has been shut out of artistic expression within school systems for various reasons might not necessarily express their desire to create, perform, and participate in school music programs.

Indeed, there has been a tremendous amount of documentation produced about the movements of musical alternatives in music education. The Tanglewood Symposium sponsored by the Music Educator's National Conference in 1967 called for the use of popular music in the curriculum to assist with the development of student agency (Green, 2006; Isbell, 2007; Lebler, 2008). Yet we still have not moved very far to change our practices as music educators. The seminal work of Green (2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2008) has influenced music education practice to include informal approaches and processes that addressed the musical needs of a broad range of students. In *Alternative Approaches in Music Education* (Clements, 2010), educators

described their lived experiences in the classroom developing musical ideas with students outside mainstream music education. It contains quite a collection of lessons, observations, and experiences in the field by educators who understand the value of music education for all. Westerlund (2006) unsettled the master-apprentice model of music education for situated teaching and learning practices and processes which valued student knowledge and build musical communities. Mantie (2008) described the *One World Youth Arts Project* in Toronto, Canada which re-imagined school music through audio recording processes for young people in an inner city high school. Mantie argued against traditional ensemble practice in schools as socially unjust, as they did not appeal to young people from marginalized backgrounds (p. 474). This piece by Mantie resonated profoundly with the dissertation research given the similar finding that young people who had never participated in school music found a place in the school studio and produced music of fine quality.

We need to move past seeing these approaches as alternatives given the socially diverse nature of the lives of children and young people today. It would seem that they are important steps to change educational practice. It has been a challenge for me to develop this awareness since both my maternal grandparents were violinists who met at professional school in London, England. I grew up with an authentic, genuine love of traditional ensembles such as the symphony orchestra and have felt a strong sense of community while participating in large, professional ensembles in the eurocentric tradition. My brothers, sister, and I were all trained to play a minimum of two instruments, to study voice, and to dance within the European, classical paradigm of music-making. But, we are living in a world in which many young people arriving in the classroom are very musically self-aware in highly diverse ways. They may very well have developed this awareness on their own as explained by Buller-Peters (2004), through processes

of "enculturation and informal learning" (p. 6), as well as the media. Given the literature and the findings of this dissertation, a good start in preparing music educators would be to examine those musical and creative practices in which students are already participating in their lives. Educators could therefore see how to make this rich, diverse understanding of music the centerpiece of the lessons and pedagogy. In this way, we might be able to move beyond the notion of musical alternatives towards such practices as a sound evidence-informed mainstay.

Rodriguez (2012) discussed the complexities of developing such a music teaching and learning scenario within the informal paradigm. He worked with pre-service music educators, and also with a high school rock band. Rodriguez provideed snapshots as to what was involved in teaching music using the informal model of Green (2001, 2008). One of his insights was that informal music teaching and learning was riddled with formality. As such, informal approaches needed to be formalized and figured into how music teachers were trained. Rodriguez stated, "I believe teachers need more concise recommendations on how to provide freedom and direction while remaining compassionate and resourceful leaders, even as longstanding rules for teaching are replaced with newer, mostly untested ones" (p. 125).

Following the voices of young participants in this study and the scholarship of critical pedagogues presented here, critical thinking must be interjected into the training of music teachers to avoid a repetition of the past in music education, and education in general (Giroux, 1985, 1994; Smyth 2007, 2011; Smyth et al., 2008; Smyth & McInerney, 2012). The bifurcation of musical experiences of young people in and out of school has resulted in a lower participation and engagement of young people in school music; giving rise to the informal music education movement. The diversity of backgrounds and traditions within classrooms simply could not be addressed through formal music education practices (Green, 2002, 2008; Lamont, Hargreaves,

Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003). Without gazing upon the newly formalized, informal music education landscape with more critical lenses, the same young people will continue to be repeatedly privileged. Music teachers must be prepared to be constantly uncomfortable, questioning, and flexible to change what we are doing, how we are doing it, and why changes are required. The interrogation of the maestro is both possible and valued as evidenced by the youth participants and scholarship presented in this dissertation. The following chapter extends the insights by moving for artful approaches to the teaching and learning of music in more inclusive ways for young people, and applying these principles to other educational settings.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and New Beginnings

The scholarly, tuneful, youthful voices that interrupted the maestro in this dissertation research brought to light possibilities for artful interrogations of teaching and learning practices and processes. I heard resonances of such artful interrogations when I welcomed student analysis of a piece of music by the group A Tribe Called Red, as I described in Chapter 7, when I assisted my students to re-organize the recruitment campaign for the music program in a more inclusive fashion on their initiative explicated in Chapter 6, and each time I felt a great sense of pride and contentment while witnessing their growing confidence and involvement in school and community life through the arts. In the spring of 2014, a student entered my classroom to ask if he could take music next year in grade twelve, even though he "didn't know anything about music," as he put it. In talking with him, I found out he had been free styling and performing rap and hip-hop songs in the local community for three years. He had written most of the songs himself, including many of the beats and back-up music which he had mixed, and co-written/co-performed with other musicians from different parts of Cape Breton. I told him, "Yes, please sign up for the course so you can teach us how to do some of that." He laughed at this comment and handed me the registration form to sign. Next to him stood one of his friends, Joe (from our Song Writer's Club), with a quiet grin on his face.

Reflecting back on experiences such as these, which occurred during the period of fieldwork and data collection, I heard how our analysis was comprised of much more than a finite set of observations, principles, properties, or answers. The resonances from our research transcended analysis. Ours was a living analysis: *We were living our art* (Gouzouasis, 2006; Irwin et al., 2008). Our conclusions were really just another series of beginnings. I understood from reading Carr's (2010) *The Shallows* how technology was fragmenting our thinking and

adversely affecting our young people. However, after working with these students for fifteen months collecting the data, I heard something I had not heard before. Young people are also using the technology in ways that have produced an open-mindedness that I do not remember experiencing in my youth. Thinking back to the words of Halia, their young voices need to be listened to, heard, thought about, and cared for as she concluded in Chapter 7.

Circling back to Chapter 1, young people are feeling silenced in schools, in ways that are leading to their disenfranchisement from public school institutions (Smale & Gounko, 2012; Smyth & Hattam, 2001, 2002; Smyth & McInerney, 2012, 2013; Tilleczek, 2008, 2012; Tilleczek et al., 2011; Willms & Friesen, 2012; Willms et al., 2009). As adults working with young people, we need to listen closely to these silences while assisting young people to break them. One of the parents of the participants hosted many student jam sessions in her home. I asked if she would design a cover for the Club CD we were putting out at the end of the year (see Appendix I). The students came up with the title "Shouting in Silence" which they felt was most appropriate to their work in the Club. When this parent received the title, she painted an original picture whose digital copy served as the CD cover. In light of the need to break the silence of young people in school, how can adults listen, hear, think about, and care for the ideas and opinions of young people? Are there deeper messages beneath the shouting they feel is necessary to be heard in school?

Artfully Co-constructing a Reflection: "The Prettiness [of art] *is* the Emotion"

Chapter 1 discussed the role of the teacher as informed by Dewey (1938) and critical pedagogues across the ages (Bartel, 2004a, 2004b; Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013a, 2013b; Giroux, 1985, 1994; hooks, 1994; Smyth, 2007, 2011) with more artful approaches to research and teaching explicated in Chapter 2 (Gouzouasis, 2006; Irwin et al., 2008), paved a path toward

working with young people as "artful co-construction." In my case, artful co-construction was a musical co-construction. It was a musical map. It was transformative listening for meaningful action. It was a series of emergent, performed texts. It was critically responsive, mindful, socially conscious, and profoundly ethical. And although it relied upon participation in one main arts media which was music in our case, it could include the many integrated, alternative arts media currently being embraced by young people (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013b). The images and videos the students created and insisted on including in the data set supported this idea.

The rehearsal model of music education might not need to be eliminated (Bartel, 2004a). But it needs to be challenged by and eventually replaced with a very different approach to ensemble music-making. "Does my music offend you? Well maybe your music offends me," said Halia to another student during the period of research. When one cannot hear one's own thoughts, these thoughts eventually go away and are replaced with the noise. What is *really* behind this "noise?" Gangsters? Criminals? How are we judging this? Through sight and sound? But, what if we are wrong? What if our eyes and ears deceive us as Berger (1972) has suggested? Remembering Halia's words in Chapter 7:

> [Mockingly] I hate my parents. I hate my teachers. I hate the government. I hate the police. Like, I hate everything! And I'm just, I'm such a rebel. 'Cause that's really cool now. To be rebellious and like have tattoos, and have piercings, and be bad, and do bad things" and like, I may look like this [referring to herself], but I've always been the same. I'm not like the "ra, ra, ra!

At certain points during the dissertation research, all I seemed to hear was anger and noise. Can I hear something beneath this? If so, what? I was shocked and offended. Art helps us transcend the ordinary does it not? By contrast, it felt as though this music plunged me into

the noise and chaos of school life. Irlen once told me the music of his group was "all about the pressures" they were feeling in school and society. Singing about these pressures was their way of getting past them. This was not so different from the aerobics instructor hollering out movements to the class (DeNora, 2000) to lift their feet higher and to push themselves beyond their comfort zones. Similarly, the orchestral conductor pushes the orchestra to the limits of their capacities to an almost painful point, so they exceed their expectations.

I listened again to the ways in which students put all of themselves into their music and then grew and developed in interesting ways. For instance, they began to help others with their own music. They began to learn and appreciate different genres of music I had not seen them play and sing before that time. And, they talked to me about how their interests in different subjects and disciplines had grown. Some began to excel in various aspects of their schooling. Others decided to move onto other paths away from formal schooling completely, but told me they were continuing to grow. Our collaborative space to create and express had made possible other spaces in their lives to learn new things. Perhaps teaching and learning cannot get any prettier than this.

Mixing up a Colander of Ideas

Using the idea of transformative listening developed as part of our methodology explicated in Chapter 2 helped make audible those missing voices in the Song Writer's Club as revealed in Chapters 5 through 7. I often took the ideas of the students which had made a deep impression upon me, and used them as the focus around which to build the fugal analyses such as those described in Chapters 5 through 7. These student ideas collectively formed a colander as expressed by Ché in Chapter 6 (see Figure 20):

- We need to share power.
- We need authority.

- You are like our mentor.
- You give us inspiration.
- Kind of nice when someone gives you the ok.
- We are feeling pressure.
- We don't want to disappoint adults.
- We need to break free from the constructed music.
- We need structure.
- We need to express ourselves in school.
- WGBG.
- We need balance.
- We need to talk to adults.
- We need to feel a part of the school and community.
- Find a way to put more of ourselves into our work.
- Music is a way to vent.
- I think as long as there's something you love to do in school.
- Most of them know better, but they don't really care enough.
- Song Writer's and music class is like an escape from the world.
- I know I can trust everyone here.
- We're really judgy.
- It's more of a family than a class.
- Stereotyping is a barrier to change.
- To get something done, we have to work collectively.
- An emperor mentality; the man at the Classical piano.
- I'm the smaller voice within a big crowd here.
- Never just listening; listen, hear, think, and care.
- Loudness, ridiculousness, cats and tea.
- We talk about corporate art, but we all do our part.
- Surrounded by like-minded people**.**
- Why does art always have to be pretty?

- That's not really the point, Miss.
- We know we struck gold.
- You can put your heart and soul into it.

Figure 20. Collection of some ideas emerging from the music-making processes of the Club. Includes insights into music education, school in general, and ways for youth to overcome barriers to growth and development in school and society.

Listening again to the insights in our colander while reflecting back on those stories, which occurred during the fifteen-month research period, enabled me to understand more fully how transformative listening enriched the learning experiences in the classroom. Listening deeply to these insights led naturally to questions that were raised within the class. The colander of each class will take on the particular character of the students and teacher within any given context. Most importantly, the insights of these students did not get lost and become inaudible. They were contested, affirmed, developed, and transformed artfully in the classroom with the guidance of the teacher.

Cacophonies: Gems of insight. As a reminder to the reader, the change of font to Lucida Handwriting is an invitation into my experience of difference (James, 2000) as an analytical tool in my reflexive method working with young people (Ellis, 1991; Ellis et al., 2011). Experiencing many different world views while growing up assisted me in hearing and interpreting the multiple perspectives of music education voiced by the students in our creative, fugue-like analysis.

It is the sounds I remember most. The sounds of so many different voices and worldviews colliding included the soft voice of Auntie Mavis, slight British accent of Uncle Rupert, loud American accent of our New York cousins, the laid back Caribbean accent of cousin Ronnie, the deep laugh of Uncle Henry, and the constant giggle of Auntie Monica. These sounds have formed and fashioned me

throughout my life. This cacophony lives within me. The sounds of difference. The struggles, the resolutions, the anger unresolved for years. All of it. But underneath, always the feeling of belonging. Always a new way of hearing something, and looking at things. Each with a story behind it. These sounds are the heart and soul of who I am, what I do as a teacher, and how I do it. The young people with whom I collaborate seem to experience such cacophonies on a daily level. And our teaching and learning processes have been a journey listening to these sounds and using them to grow and change.

It was in the context of examining the insights of the students, in our colander, while working towards more engaged learning in the classroom, that it struck me how the compositional techniques described in Chapter 3 related more directly to our analysis. The dissonances were the struggles between us voicing our opinions over whether or not the Celtic death metal band should play in the show. The consonances were the different agreements of diverse opinions across various groups of young people. The juxtapositions were the performances of completely different genres of music contained in a single show. The fugue-like themes included (among many others) WGBG, the prettiness of art, being shy, getting noticed, special picks amongst artists, putting yourself out there, and being into it. These themes, and many others, occurred over and over again during the entire process of musical performance and production. They were developed in jam sessions, on stage, in studio, and in our interviews. Their multi-voiced discussions made this project polyphonic, but with limitless voicings. The soprano-alto-tenor-bass (SATB) voicings representing the traditional ranges of voices in an ensemble setting would not be sufficient. Parents who became involved and voiced their opinions as to who should get noticed as discussed in Chapter 7, or as appreciative supporters of

such diverse groups of young people (see Figure 20) added more voicings and more themes to our composition. I understand from my musical training the many ways in which we lived and developed our analysis.

However, in a process which is so dynamic in the classroom, as Irlen observed in Chapter 7, we needed to develop another term that moved beyond this polyphony to describe a more living analysis. I contend that cacophony is a better term for this process. If we think of the combination of dissonant sounds occurring at once, which may produce a low rumble, I believe this is the exact effect I am trying to describe as emanating from this dissertation research process. The clashing of ideas, agreements among certain groups, recurring questions and themes, and distinctly different musical ideas: all the above produce such a cacophony. In my classroom, when students are trying to work out a difficult passage of music, troubleshoot during recording sessions, plan for a show, or unpack audience feedback after a musical performance, I hear this sort of cacophony. But, amidst this cacophony are shining gems of insight as we revealed in our colander and developed in a creative, fugue-like manner.

Often, the resolution to these difference of opinions was worked out in musical performance. The resolutions were revealed when the students made statements about learning all kinds of different music from one another, or in gaining an appreciation for various genres of music. A living cacophony would, therefore, best describe our research process. For educators who will read this dissertation and think that they "simply not have time for this," I would like to reassure them. We simply do not have time *not* to do this. I suggest that educators could keep a journal of things that strike them and reflect back on these ideas during their free moments. I suggest that educators continue to listen for deeper meanings in what the students are saying. Let these young people hear and see when you cannot figure something out. They will help you!

But most of all, enjoy working with them. If educators can find that space in school to show others who they are, there will be no limit to their learning. If we can be open to receiving new knowledge from the students, our professional growth will continue indefinitely.

Transformative listening leads to action in the classroom through stimulating collaborative teaching and learning processes just as Smyth (2011) has also suggested. And, these actions lead to a change of approaches and processes. This transformative listening is rooted in ethical thinking and awareness of self and other. When we care about others, we will listen to hear what they have to say. Not only listen, but hear, think, care, as Halia said. I would like to add *act* to her list! As we well know, students who might be experiencing difficulties being heard in their lives may reveal some of their insights into teaching and learning processes during classroom activities. These are the statements that weigh heavily upon us, that we remember at unpredictable times, and that we cannot seem to ignore. The data presented in this thesis suggests that educators embrace these sounds into the classroom to help make the teaching and learning rich and diverse. In this, the dissertation research concurs with hooks (1994) and Tilleczek (2014).

Two days prior to my finishing this chapter, two former students and a grade ten student arrived in my classroom. The former students had graduated from high school two and five years earlier. Jerry was now coaching new rising artists in the area, and was accompanied by grade ten student, Rachel, who was now just starting out on a solo singing gig. Fred had graduated from a post-secondary, audioengineering program in the region a year before. He was working between Toronto and Halifax in the film and music industries. I had received a phone call the week before from Jerry who was training Rachel. We had set up the time for them to record her in the school studio.

I stood like a proud parent before these two professionals who had been in my classes for their three years of high school. In the case of Fred who was engineering the recording, he had also taken the International Baccalaureate Music Program with me five years earlier. All of a sudden, I heard from the studio, "Verne? Do you have any SM-58's?" The proud parent disappeared from the shock of hearing her first name. I paused for a second before replying, "Yes. How many do you need?" "Just one, thanks," Fred replied. He proceeded to set-up to record the track. When I returned later to hear the finished product (which was absolutely breathtaking), he told me, "Verne, I left the settings open on the desktop for your students to take a look at, and I can come in the next time I'm in Sydney to give them a workshop in Pro Tools if you'd like." The student had become the teacher, and . . . the teacher had become a roadie. I do not think I have ever felt as great a sense of fulfillment as a teacher as I did at that moment. The process of engaging in this dissertation had illustrated the many unique ways in which the maestro is interrogated and shifted towards more robust forms of education.

Final Sounds for Now

This dissertation documents an intense research process that has moved away from traditional arts education practices and processes to embrace new sounds and sights in education and in youth-attuned research. The disengagement of young people from secondary schools has given rise to the absolute necessity to hear, see, and do school differently through welcoming young lives into the classroom (Smale & Gounko, 2012; Smyth, 2006, 2007; Smyth et al., 2008; Smyth & Hattam, 2001, 2002; Smyth & McInerney, 2012; Tilleczek, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2014; Tilleczek et al., 2011). They employed musical performance to disrupt traditional forms of music education in collaboration with me, and to bring about a more relevant engagement in school. Our work therefore adds to the literature on school engagement from an arts-based

perspective and sits in agreement with that of other scholars (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009; Dunleavy, Milton et al., 2012; Dunleavy, Willms et al., 2012; Willms & Friesen, 2012). The research also gives impetus to educational practices of dialogue between students and the teacher, parent and administrators, vis-à-vis how the arts can be used to disrupt traditional and/or oppressive educational practices (Tilleczek & Ferguson, 2013).

Yet there is another "wolf in sheep's clothing" which was also confronted in this dissertation. In his article entitled "Why the arts don't do anything: Toward a new vision for cultural production," Gaztambide-Fernández (2013b) argued that a rhetoric of effects is employed by arts education scholarship to show how a focus in the arts will assist students to achieve positive academic outcomes. These beliefs obscure the public understanding of the arts as something people do by focusing instead upon what the arts do for people. Gaztambide-Fernández offered a rhetoric of cultural production as an alternative to the rhetoric of effects. He asserted that "the rhetoric of cultural production focuses on rethinking the very terms of engagement around which education happens; it focuses on the conditions that shape experience rather than the outcomes" (p. 216).

Dewey (1938) argued that meaningful teaching and learning occurs in social contexts. If this is the case, it would seem that the young people in this study have made quite a start to rethinking arts education by working to change the fundamental relationships at the heart of public school education, and in music education in particular. We troubled up and responded to the need for a change of the role of the music teacher as I laid aside my baton to work *with* the students just as Allsup & Benedict (2008) and Friesen (2009) suggested. We also troubled and responded to the call to erase teacher-student binaries as these young people voiced their wealth of expertise in the Song Writer's Club just as other scholars had suggested (Arnot & Reay, 2007;

Bragg, 2007; Burke, 2007; Cook-Sather, 2002, 2006; Fielding, 2007). We spoke about, and worked towards challenging the idea of the musician to bring about a richer engagement of these young people in music-making as Gaztambide-Fernández (2010) suggested.

Crucial to these engagements was the collaboration between teacher and student to challenge commonly held ideas about institutionally defined cultures of teaching and learning and to bring the life experiences of these young people into the classroom. This collaboration happened through theorizing methodological approaches that were critical (Giroux, 1985, 1994; Smith 2002, 2006a, 2006b; Smyth, 2011; Smyth et al., 2008), dialogic (Dance et al., 2010; Douglas, 1985; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Freire, 1974; Mason, 2002), reflexive (Adkins, 2002; Coffey, 2002; May, 1998; Skeggs, 2002), and performative (Alexander, 2005; Conquergood, 1985; Fabian, 1990). This set of approaches and processes which were constantly in motion made possible the composition of new and different notions of music education and education in general coming from these young people themselves. The truth is, we *did* education differently during the dissertation research. The message we convey here is that theorizing practice needs to be a co-construction through dialogue and action, among young people and adults in various educational contexts. Through collaborative, artful teaching and learning processes, more diverse and inclusive interpretations of music education, arts education, and education in general will arise from the students.

The work of this dissertation also leveled a challenge to the assumptions about who should be heard in public school music education programs. As so many progressive scholars have now suggested, the concept of at-risk youth that circulates in our schools and society is highly problematic (Smale & Gounko, 2012; Smyth & Hattam, 2001, 2002; Tilleczek, 2011, 2014; Tilleczek & Ferguson, 2013). As such research has shown, *any* of the students can be at-

risk at various points in their lives due to unforeseen circumstances. Einstein and Mary Ruth have asked us to examine that ways in which the obstacles are within. As a guide to developing arts education paradigms differently, relevant questions arise: How are young people building youth culture through music and the arts? How are they employing music and the arts in their growth and development? How can arts educators and others assist them with their processes?

Although data collection has terminated, the Song Writer's Club is currently continuing at Sydney Academy High School due to the efforts of some of the original students, new students, and my ongoing support. Songwriting, performing, and recording have become part of the mainstay of the approaches to teaching and learning music in my current context. But they have not remained exclusively within the Club. Students in the band, choir, and general music classes have become involved in these music-making practices that have found their way into instrumental, vocal, and general music classes. Currently, the students are involved in knowledge mobilization of their message of inclusive music education through public performances and concert tours to other schools in the region. Further dissemination includes publication of this work, and the expansion of the performance venues of young people in engaging ways which allow them to turn their lived experiences into creative expressions (Dewey, 1934): Collaborating with students who become more and more inner-directed while being mindful of others will lead to the continuance of more ethical, youthful, creative teaching and learning in and outside the classroom.

> Goldilocks: I guess it's kind of like your mind drifts off, and all you're thinking of is chords and lyrics and just, your personal experiences through life. Like when I try and write a song I always feel like what I ever did in life; what I didn't do, what I did wrong, always just comes flooding back, and I try to put that in music.

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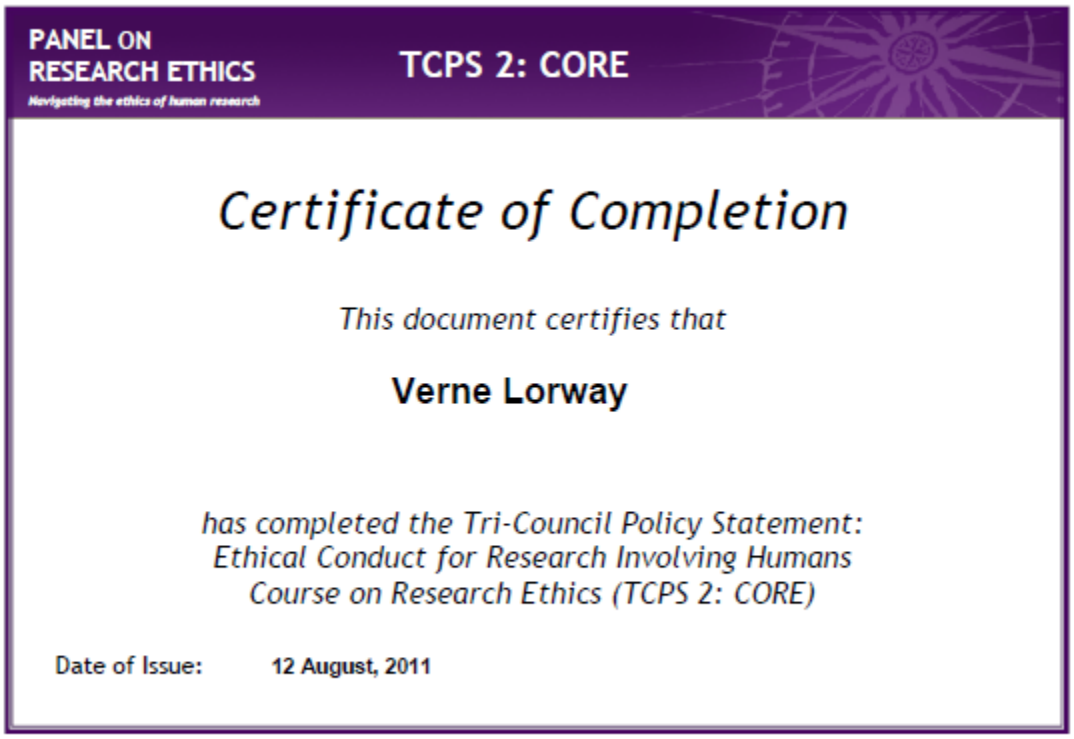
Appendix A

Tri-Council Policy Certificate of Completion



PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS

Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Verne Lorway

has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)

Date of Issue: **12 August, 2011**

Appendix B

Poster for Recruitment of Student Participants

Appendix C

Application for Student Participation in SA Song Writer's Club

Name: _____ Age: ____ Grade: _____ Female/Male (please circle one)
Contact information: Tel no.:_____ Alternate or cell: _____
Email address: _____

Musical interests (performer, technical, equipment direction, publicity, manager):
_____

As you know, SA Song Writer's Club centers around the investigation of your ideas and opinions of student engagement in music-making through musical performance, and is structured on questions such as: What does music-making mean to you? Whose music gets played and why? Is your voice being heard in school and the greater community through music-making?

Why do you think this is an important topic to research? Why do you want to participate in this Club?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are you applying as an individual, or as a member of a band? _____
How many members are in your band? _____ Band name _____
Demo recording included with application? Yes/No
Link to youtube video, and/or personal website: _____

Appendix D

Information Letter for Students and Parents/Guardians

September 5th, 2012

Greetings students, parents and guardians!

I am here to tell you about an exciting research project being held from September, 2012 to June, 2013 at **Sydney Academy.** The project is called, "Farewell to the maestro: Tuneful youth insights as building blocks of an engaged pedagogy." This project is a part of my research in the PhD in Educational Studies program at UPEI. The project examines the engagement of young people in school through music-making. The focus of the research is the development of student voice through music-making and to explore what it means for young people to be engaged in school musical performances. Data gathered will be analyzed and used in my doctoral dissertation and for future publication.

Your son and/or daughter has been selected by application to participate in the *SA Song Writer's Club*. They come from a wide range of backgrounds and musical interests. This Club will meet once a week after school for two hours each time; every Friday. *If she/he chooses to participate in the Club, no harm will come to her/him. She/he may opt out of any part of the research process at any time, free from penalty of any kind. In the case of a withdrawal from the Club, her/his work will be destroyed. In the event of her/his opting out of the research, she/he may continue their work in the Club if they wish.* I am aware of the fact that many of the students are currently being assessed by me in music classes during the regular school schedule. However, this research is separate from their school work and will *not* be assessed by me in any way.

As part of the activities of the Club, your son and/or daughter will be asked to participate in the organization of performances in the school and community. They will be asked to arrange for school and community venues, advertise for performances, network with school and board administrators and staff to ensure the smooth running of the events, design and run the Club website, and recording audio tracks of their live and studio performances and performance processes. As we will be going public with recorded performances on a website designed by the students, everyone needs to be aware that the students will not be anonymous during the project. However, they will be able to select pseudonyms for their work shown on the website should they so desire.

Also, your son and/or daughter will participate in four short, thirty minute interviews during the months of January, 2013 and May, 2013. During each month, I will interview your son and/or daughter for thirty minutes, and they will be interviewed by one of their peers in the Club for thirty minutes. The nature of these interviews will be to learn about student opinions of the overall music-making process and their engagement within it. Issues of inclusion/exclusion, identity, voice, and any ideas they have about the running of the Club will be welcome during these interviews, and will figure into the future direction of the Club itself.

All names will be changed in the interview transcripts. Again, the students can decide on pseudonyms for this part of the project. Every effort needs to be maintained to guard the confidentiality of the participants after the interviews. Although it is impossible to guarantee total confidentiality in this case, I will have a talk with the students before the project begins about the importance of working towards

the achievement of confidentiality while doing research. One of our in house support people, Ms. Gloria Johnson , has agreed to aid us in this discussion.

Also, Mr. Brad Burke has agreed to help us. He will help ensure comments on the Club website are of an appropriate nature. Mr. Burke has served as a community liaison officer within our school community for the past five years.

I would like to thank you in advance for your interest in this research, and hope you will become a part of what promises to be a fabulous research project for the students and school community, if you choose to participate/allow your son and/or daughter to participate. The students will have a rich musical experience while developing valuable, transferrable skills as social science researchers. In my experience the process of music-making and production is a highly pleasurable experience for these young people. However, students will also be acting as researchers of their own musical worlds. Therefore, they will receive the benefits of acquiring and improving their musical skills, along with knowledge of and skills in social science research. At the end of the analysis period in June, 2013, students will be given a compilation CD of the songs written, performed, and recorded in the Club during the year. Students will own the rights to their songs and performances. The focus of the research is the process and pedagogy of the Club which has assisted them in the production of these works.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any further questions during the research period in the school year from 2012-2013.

Sincerely,

Verne Lorway, Ph.D. student, UPEI
Music teacher, Sydney Academy
902-562-1305 (w) vlorway@groupwise.upei.ca; vlorway@staff.ednet.ns.ca

The Research Ethics Boards of UPEI and Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board have approved this research project. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board for assistance at (902) 620-5104, (reb@upei.ca), the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board (902-562-5464), Supervisory team members Dr. Kate Tilleczek and Dr. Suzanne Thomas at ktilleczek@upei.ca and sthomas@upei.ca, and/or Verne Lorway (Principal Investigator) at vlorway@groupwise.upei.ca or 902-562-5464.

Appendix E

Letter of Consent for Student

I would like to invite you to participate in an exciting research project with UPEI and CBVRSB. It is called, "Farewell to the maestro: Tuneful youth insights as building blocks of an engaged pedagogy." In this project, you will be acting as researchers in education. As members of the *SA Song Writer's Club*, you will be investigating the engagement of students in music-making through writing and performing music, working as sound technicians, web-designers, equipment managers, publicity managers, and other aspects of music-making you can add to this list.

If you choose to be part of this research project, no harm will come to you. You may opt out of any part of the research process at any time, free from penalty of any kind. In the case of a withdrawal from the Club, your work will be destroyed. In the event of your opting out of the research, you may continue your work in the Club if you wish. You will be asked to submit samples of your song compositions, as well as audio recordings of the entire musical performance, production process. You will also be asked to help set up for live shows, to do audio recordings of live and studio performances, and to help create and manage the Club website. In addition, you will be asked to participate in four short interviews with myself and your peers at two points during the year. I am aware of the fact that many of you are currently being assessed by me in music classes during the regular school schedule. However, this research is separate from your school work and will *not* be assessed by me in any way.

All interviews will be recorded on our "Zoom" and saved in a secure, locked unit in the music room from week to week, and at the Central Office of the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board until September, 2019. Don't worry – your names will be changed to pseudonyms you pick out yourselves. If you choose to interview another member of the Club, please try to keep these interviews confidential. If one of your peers has shared something personal with you in the interview, they will feel very vulnerable if you reveal what they say in private to others. At the same time, I cannot guarantee that your peer acting as an interviewer will keep everything completely confidential. So, you will need to understand this when you are trying to decide what to say in the interviews. I will discuss this in more detail with you before the Club begins. Ms. Johnson has agreed to participate in this discussion with us.

I believe you will gain a lot from the experience if you decide to be a part of the Club. In my experience the process of music-making and production is a highly pleasurable experience for young people like yourselves. However, you will also be acting as researchers of their own musical worlds. Therefore, you will receive the benefits of gaining and improving your musical skills, along with knowledge of and skills in social science research. At the end of the analysis period in June, 2013, you will be given a compilation CD of the songs written, performed, and recorded in the Club during the year. Also, you will own the rights to your songs and performances. The focus of the research is on the process and pedagogy of the Club which has assisted you in the production of these works.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at vlorway@groupwise.upei.ca, vlorway@staff.ednet.ns.ca, 902-562-1305, or 902-562-5464.

Consent:

By signing this form, I agree that:

1) The study has been explained to me. All my questions were answered.
2) The possible harms and discomforts of this study have been explained to me.
3) I will be audio recorded during the study. These recordings will be used by the researchers to explore and understand the more about the process of youth engagement and learning through music.
4) I understand that I have the right to refuse to take part in this study. I also have the right to withdraw from this part of the study at any time. e.g. before or even after the recordings are made.
5) I can ask questions about the study at any time now and in the future.
6) I have been told that all research information will be kept confidential, except where required by law (e.g. suspected child abuse).
7) I understand that no information that would identify me will be released or printed.
8) I understand that no information about me (including recordings) will be given to anyone or be published without first asking my permission.
9) I understand that I can keep a copy of the signed and dated Consent Form.

Consent of students

Name of student: _____

Please check all that you consent to, put an "X" next to those you don't and then sign:

- ☐ I agree, or give my consent to submit my recorded materials during the activities of the *SA Song Writer's Club*
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of audio samples from the Club
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of video samples from the Club
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of images from the Club
- ☐ I agree, or give my consent to participate in an interview conducted by a student researcher
- ☐ I give my permission for my interview tapes with another student researcher to be used for this research project
- ☐ I agree, or give my consent to participate in an interview with Ms. Lorway
- ☐ I give my permission for my interview tapes with Ms. Lorway to be used for this research project
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of anonymous quotations from my interviews in the research report (understanding that I will not be identified in any way)
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to participate in the development of a website to update parents/guardians and the school and greater community on the Club progress, understanding my recorded tracks may appear on the site with my approval
- ☐ I agree, or give my consent for Ms. Lorway to use the data gathered in her doctoral dissertation and for publication
- ☐ I agree, or give my consent for Ms. Lorway to use the data collected in the form of audio specimens and interview tapes of my work for secondary analysis in the future.
- ☐ I understand that short summaries of the research process will be available to us during the study.

I would like to receive these summaries: Yes _____ No _____
Please indicate how you would like to receive the summary:
Mail to home _____ Email to you _____
Other _____

Please provide a mailing or email address:
Name: _____
Street address: _____
City: _____ Province: _____
Postal Code: _____
Email: _____

_____ _____
Name of student Signature and Date

The Research Ethics Boards of UPEI and Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board have approved this research project. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board for assistance at (902) 620-5104, (reb@upei.ca), the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board (902-562-5464), Supervisory team members Dr. Kate Tilleczek and Dr. Suzanne Thomas at ktilleczek@upei.ca and sthomas@upei.ca, and/or Verne Lorway (Principal Investigator) at vlorway@groupwise.upei.ca or 902-562-5464.

For facilitator only: I was present when (parent/guardian and son/daughter)
_____ _____ read this
Consent Form and agreed/consented, to participate in this research study.

_____ _____
Printed name of student Signature & Date

_____ _____
Printed name of parent/guardian Signature & Date

_____ _____
Printed name of person who obtained consent Signature & Date

Appendix F

Letter of Consent for Parent/Guardian

I would like to invite your son and/or daughter to participate in an exciting research project with UPEI and CBVRSB. It is called, "Farewell to the maestro: Tuneful youth insights as building blocks of an engaged pedagogy." The project examines the engagement of young people in school through music-making.

If they choose to be part of this research project, no harm will come to these young people. They may opt out of any part of the research process at any time, free from penalty of any kind. In the case of a withdrawal from the Club, their work will be destroyed. In the event of their opting out of the research, they may continue with their work in the Club if they wish. They will be asked to submit samples of their song compositions, as well as audio recordings of the entire musical performance, production process. They will also be asked to help set up for live shows, to do audio recordings of live and studio performances, and to help create and manage the Club website. In addition, they will be asked to participate in four short interviews with myself and your peers at two points during the year. I am aware of the fact that many of the students are currently being assessed by me in music classes during the regular school schedule. However, this research is separate from their school work and will *not* be assessed by me in any way.

All interviews will be recorded on our "Zoom" and saved in a secure, locked unit in the music room from week to week, and at the Central Office of the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board until September, 2019. Don't worry – their names will be changed to pseudonyms they pick out themselves. If they choose to interview another member of the Club, they will be asked to keep these interviews confidential. If one of their peers has shared something personal with them in the interview, they will feel very vulnerable if it is revealed to others. At the same time, I cannot guarantee that their peers acting as interviewers will keep everything completely confidential. So, your son and/or daughter needs to understand this when trying to decide what to say in the interviews. I will discuss this in more detail with the students before the Club begins. Ms. Johnson has agreed to participate in this discussion with us.

I believe they will gain a lot from the experience if they decide to be a part of the Club. In my experience the process of music-making and production is a highly pleasurable experience for these young people. However, students will be acting as researchers of their own musical worlds. Therefore, they will receive the benefits of acquiring and improving their musical skills, along with knowledge of and skills in social science research. At the end of the analysis period in June, 2013, students will be given a compilation CD of the songs written, performed, and recorded in the Club during the year. Students will own the rights to their songs and performances. The focus of the research is the process and pedagogy of the Club which has assisted them in the production of these works.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support in what promises to be a fabulous research project for the students and school community. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any further questions at vlorway@groupwise.upei.ca, vlorway@staff.ednet.ns.ca, 902-562-1305, or 902-562-5464.

Consent:

By signing this form, I agree that:

1) The study involving my son and/or daughter have been explained to me. All my questions were answered.
2) The possible harms and discomforts of my son and/or daughter of this study have been explained to me.
3) My son and/or daughter will be audio recorded during the study. These recordings will be used by the researchers to explore and understand the more about the process of youth engagement and identity through music.
4) I understand that my son and/or daughter have the right to refuse to take part in this study. She/he also has the right to withdraw from this part of the study at any time. e.g. before or even after the recordings are made.
5) My son and/or daughter and I can ask questions about the study at any time now and in the future.
6) My son and/or daughter have been told that all research information will be kept confidential, except where required by law (e.g. suspected child abuse).
7) I understand that no information that would identify my son and/or daughter will be released or printed.
8) I understand that no information about my son and/or daughter (including recordings) will be given to anyone or be published without first asking my permission.
9) I understand that my son and/or daughter and I can keep a copy of the signed and dated Consent Form.

Consent of parents/guardians

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Name of son and/or daughter:_____
Please check all that you consent to, put an "X" next to those you don't and then sign:

- ☐ I agree, or give my consent for my son and/or daughter to submit their recorded materials
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of audio samples produced by my son and/or daughter in the Club
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of video samples produced by my son and/or daughter in the Club
- ☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of images produced by my son and/or daughter in the Club
- ☐ I agree, or give my consent for my son and/or daughter to participate in an interview conducted by a student researcher
- ☐ I agree, or give my consent for my son and/or daughter to participate in a follow-up interview with Ms. Lorway
- ☐ I give my permission for the interview tapes of my son and/or daughter to be used for this research project

☐ I agree, or give consent, to allow the use of anonymous quotations from the interviews of my son and/or daughter in the research report (understanding that they will not be identified in any way)

☐ I agree, or give my consent for my son and/or daughter to participate in the development of a website to update parents/guardians and the school and greater community on the Club progress, understanding her/his recorded tracks may appear on the site with her/his approval

☐ I agree, or give my consent for Ms. Lorway to use the data gathered in her doctoral dissertation and for publication

☐ I give my consent for Ms. Lorway to use the data collected in the form of audio specimens and interview tapes of my son and/or daughter for secondary analysis in the future.

I understand that short summaries of the research process will be available to us during the study.
I would like to receive these summaries: Yes _____ No _____
Please indicate how you would like to receive the summary:
Mail to home _____ Email to you _____
Other _____

Please provide a mailing or email address:
Name: _____
Street address: _____
City: _____ Province: _____
Postal Code: _____
Email: _____

_____ _____
Name of parent/guardian Signature and Date

The Research Ethics Boards of UPEI and Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board have approved this research project. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board for assistance at (902) 620-5104, (reb@upei.ca), the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board (902-562-5464), Supervisory team members Dr. Kate Tilleczek and Dr. Suzanne Thomas at ktilleczek@upei.ca and sthomas@upei.ca, and/or Verne Lorway (Principal Investigator) at vlorway@groupwise.upei.ca or 902-562-5464.

For facilitator only: I was present when (parent/guardian and son/daughter)
_____ _____ read this
Consent Form and agreed/consented, to participate in this research study.

_____ _____
Printed name of student Signature & Date

_____ _____
Printed name of parent/guardian Signature & Date

_____ _____
Printed name of person who obtained consent Signature & Date

Appendix G

Semi-structured, Open-ended Interview Questions

Interview Guide Questions (First Interview)

For student participants

1. How do you define and describe your engagement in music-making? Can you give examples and/or tell stories about your engagement in music-making?
2. How would you describe your engagement in music? How do you know when you are engaged in it? Give some examples and stories.
3. How do your ideas about music-making influence the teaching and learning of music in the Club?
4. What needs to be done to apply your ideas to the Club activities? To music education more generally?
5. Do you feel you are being heard in the Club, in other music classes, in school in general? Why or why not?

Interview Guide Questions (Second Interview)

For student participants

1. Looking back at the whole year, how would you define and describe your engagement in music-making?
2. How has participation in this Club affected your engagement in music-making?
3. How have your ideas influenced the teaching and learning of the Club?
4. What are the areas in need of improvement in the Club, music class, and/or school to bring them in line with your own ideas?
5. What are the obstacles to improvement of student engagement in music-making? In music class? In school in general?

Appendix H

Research Instruments

Research instruments fall into two main categories:

i School audio-recording studio equipment to gather audio specimens:

(a) Power Mac G-7 work station
(b) Mackie Onyx 1640i 16-Channel FireWire Recording Mixer
(c) Yamaha mixing console MG 32/14 FX
(d) Behringer Europower Power Amplifier PMX2000
(e) Presonus 6 channel headphone monitor
(f) 2 Alesis M1 Active MK2 studio monitors
(g) 4 Audio-Technica studio headphones
(h) Studio microphone set of fifteen microphones for instruments and voices of various frequencies
(i) 8 microphone stands
(j) Various xlr and ¼ inch patch cables
(k) 2 studio Pop filters

ii Audio-visual recorders for interviews and live performances:

(a) Zoom handy audio/video recorder (records audio only and audio-video) for interviews.
(b) iPad (3rd Generation model)

Appendix I

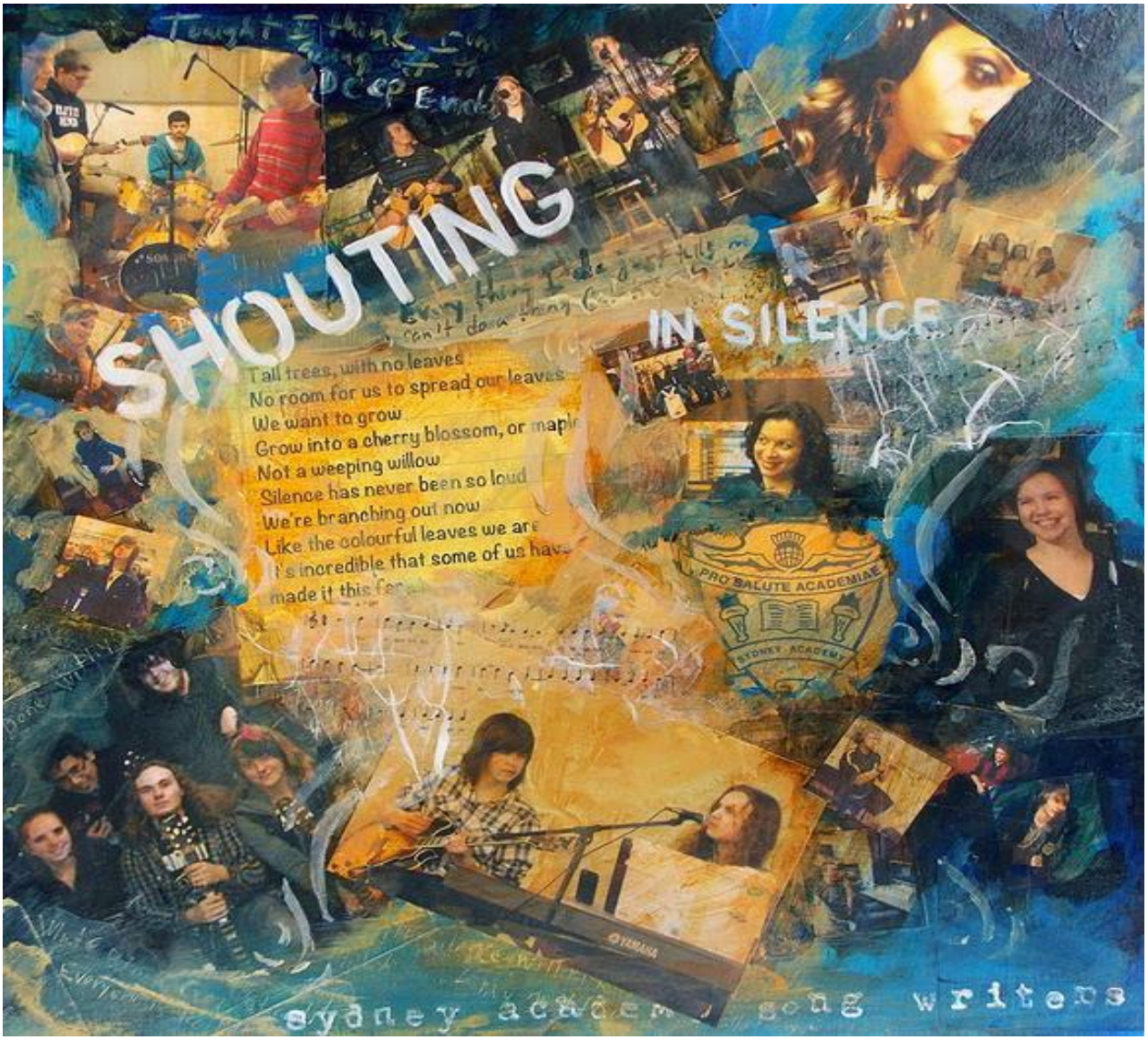
Debriefing of Student Participants and Parents/Guardians

This meeting will be for the purpose of debriefing, celebrating with, and thanking all students and their parents/guardians for their participation in the research project. I will bring them together in this meeting at the end of June, 2013 with the intention of:

1. Discussing the purpose of the study
2. Describing the process we just went through
3. Discussing the main themes which emerged during the research process
4. Sharing a sample of the assemblages gathered by the students
5. Facilitating a question and answer session about the research
6. Informing the students and their parents/guardians that I will be looking for volunteers to analyze the data again during the next round beginning in September, 2013

Appendix J

Club CD Cover Designed by a Parent of a Student Participant



Appendix K:

UPEI Research Ethics Board Approval Letter

UPEI
UNIVERSITY
of Prince Edward
ISLAND

550 University Avenue
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
Canada C1A 4P3

September 3, 2012

Verne Lorway
Faculty of Education

Dear Ms. Lorway,

Re: REB Ref # 60054966

"Farewell to the maestro: Tuneful youth insights as building blocks to an engaged pegagogy."

The above mentioned research proposal has now been reviewed under the expedited review track by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. I am pleased to inform you that the proposal has received ethics approval. Please be advised that the Research Ethics Board currently operates according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement 2: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and applicable laws and regulations.

The approval for the study as presented is valid for one year. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Ethics Renewal form is forwarded to Research Services prior to the renewal date. The information provided in this form must be current to the time of submission and submitted to Research Services not less than 30 days of the anniversary of your approval date. The Ethics Renewal from can be downloaded from the Research Services website (http://www.upei.ca/research/reb_forms).

Any proposed changes to the study must also be submitted on the same form to the UPEI Research Ethics Board for approval.

The Research Ethics Board advises that **IF YOU DO NOT** return the completed Ethics Renewal form prior to the date of renewal:

- Your ethics approval will lapse
- You will be required to stop research activity immediately
- You will not be permitted to restart the study until you reapply for and receive approval to undertake the study again.

Lapse in ethics approval may result in interruption or termination of funding.

Notwithstanding the approval of the REB, the primary responsibility for the ethical conduct of the investigation remains with you.

Sincerely,

Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board

Appendix L:

UPEI Research Ethics Board Amendment Approval Letter

REB Amendment Approved
From: <danymacdonald@upei.ca>
To: "Ms. Verne Lorway (Primary Investigator)" <vlorway@upei.ca>
CC: <danymacdonald@upei.ca>
Date: Wednesday - November 14, 2012 11:24 AM
Subject: REB Amendment Approved
Attachments: Mime.822

Dear Ms. Verne Lorway,

Your amendment for the study "Farewell to the maestro: Tuneful youth insights as building blocks to an engaged pegagogy" file number 6004966 submitted to the UPEI Research Ethics Board is has been approved. I wish you all the best with this research.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Murray, PhD
Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board
reb@upei.ca